



A Manual of Buddhist Historical Traditions

(Saddhamma-Saṅgaha)

Translated into English for the first time

BY

BIMALA CHURN LAW, M.A., LL.B., PH.D., D.LITT.

Second & Revised Edition



UNIVERSITY OF CALCUTTA

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To
THE SACRED MEMORY
OF

my esteemed friend and well-wisher, Dr. Syama-
prasad Mookerjee, Ex-Vice-Chancellor of the
University of Calcutta, as a token of high regard
and profound admiration.



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A Manual of Buddhist Historical Traditions

(*Saddhamma-Samgaha*)

INTRODUCTION

The *Saddhamma-Samgaha* which is a non-canonical Pali work of a later date, has been edited in Roman characters for the first time by N. Saddhānanda of Ceylon and published in the Journal of the Pali Text Society for the year 1890. This work, as its title suggests, is a compendium of the traditional history of Buddhism. Its colophon mentions that the book was compiled by the elder Dhammakitti of Ceylon at a great monastery called Lānkārāma built by the great king Paramarāja.

The *Saddhamma-Samgaha* presents us with a bare outline of ecclesiastical and literary history of Buddhism drawn upon traditional materials. It is a historical record of the part played by Buddhism in Ceylon. The historical value of this work is enhanced by the incursion of the account of two Buddhist Councils held in Ceylon during the reigns of Devānampiyatissa and Vaṭṭagāmiṇi. As regards the three earlier Councils held in India, its account differs materially in some respects from those found in the *Vinayacullavagga*, in the commentaries of Buddhaghosa, and in two earlier Pali



chronicles, the *Dīpavamsa* and the *Mahāvamsa*. This work also preserves very faithful records of the various Buddhist establishments of Ceylon, and it also contains important data for the chronology of Buddhist kings of India and Ceylon. A careful study of this book will surely give us glimpses into the history of Ceylon and her connection with India. After the third Buddhist Council was over, Buddhist missionaries were sent by Thera Moggaliputtatissa to different countries for the propagation of Buddhism. It was during the reign of Devānampiyatissa that therā (elder) Mahinda at the instance of therā Moggaliputtatissa went to Ceylon and with the kings' help and protection introduced Buddhism into the island of Laṅkā. In this island the order of *bhikkhūnīs* (nuns) was first established by Therī Saṅghamittā who went to Ceylon with the Bo-tree and converted the Queen Anūlā with her many female companions. The account, however, is wholly based upon the *Mahāvamsa*. This book briefly deals with Buddhaghosa's life and his visit to Ceylon during the time of Mahānāma admittedly on the basis of the *Cūlavamsa*. The only new point recorded is that Buddhaghosa met Buddha-datta on his way to Ceylon. The author does not seem to be aware of the fact that Buddhaghosa himself states in the colophon of his *Vinaya Commentary* that he undertook and completed this work during the 21st year of the reign of king Siripāla of Ceylon. This work further gives an account of the compilation of the Pali commentaries and sub-commentaries of the three *Piṭakas* including other



well-known Pali works by the *theras* (elders). It also furnishes us with valuable information of the *Mahāvihāra*, the *Abhayagirivihāra*, the *Cetiyagirivihāra*, the *Lohapāsāda*, the *Thūpārāma*, the *Mahāmeghavanavihāra*,¹ the *Pubbārāma*, and other important Buddhist establishments in Ceylon. The last two chapters strike the keynote of the *Saddhamma-Saṃgaha*. This book consists of eleven chapters which are summarised below.

The *Saddhamma-Saṃgaha* is written in an elegant and simple language. It belongs to the class of manuals and as such it is a mixture of prose and poetry. In most cases the prose portion serves only as an explanation of the poetry portion. The author has borrowed very largely from the actual texts of the *Dīpavamsa*, the *Mahāvamsa*, the *Aṭṭhakathā* and other well-known Pali works which are simply referred to as *Porāṇā* or ancient authorities. This manual contains many discourses common to the *Mahābodhivamsa*,² the *Gandhavamsa*,³ the *Sāsanavamsa*⁴ and the like.

CHAPTER I: After his enlightenment the Buddha lived for forty-five years. When he had attained the *Parinibbāna*, seven hundred thousand

¹ It was a park south of the capital city of Anurādhapura and was presented to the priesthood as a monastery by king *Davānampiyotissa*, cf. *Mahāvamsa*, Chap. I, V. 81; *ibid.*, Ch. XI, V. 3.

² *PTS* ed., S. A. Strong.

³ *JPTS*, 1886.

⁴ *PTS* ed., 1897, edited by Miss Bode & translated into English by B. C. Law, 1952, *SBB*, Vol. 17.



monks assembled there. Thera Mahākassapa, recollecting the words spoken by Subhadda, felt the necessity of reciting the *Dhamma* (doctrine) and the *Vinaya* (discipline). Five hundred elders were selected in order to hold a Council. After the rainy season, a little more than three months after the *Parinibbāna* of the Buddha, this Council was held at Rājagaha. Thera Mahākassapa who was voted to the chair, took the preacher's seat, and asked questions touching the *Vinaya* and the *Dhamma*. *Upāli* recited the *Vinaya*, and *Ānanda* the *Dhamma*. The five hundred elders recited together the texts in the manner in which they were presented and adopted. The work of the First Council was finished after seven months, and the collection of the *Vinaya* and the *Dhamma*, compiled by them, came to be known as therā tradition.

It may be noted here that according to this account, the three *Piṭakas* with all their existing books and divisions were recited in the First Buddhist Council. It is, however, clear that the author has intentionally made a mistake here by stating that all the seven books of the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka* were also recited in this Council. This statement is in direct contradiction to the statement (Ch. III), that it was in the Third Council that Thera Moggaliputtatissa expounded the *Kathāvatthu* in order to put a stop to all dissentient views. The remaining portion of this chapter is devoted to an elaborate discussion on the manifold division of the Buddha's word. This chapter contains nothing original.



CHAPTER II : A century after the *Parinibbāna* (passing away) of the Buddha, the Vajjiputtaka monks of Vesālī promulgated the Ten Points (*dasavatthuni*) which were not enjoined upon the monks. Thera Yasa, who was then staying at the *Mahāvāna*, in the *Kūṭāgāra* Hall, pinnacled building or room, heard it, and apprehending the danger in the *Sāsana*, the monks assembled. In order to hold a Council he selected only seven hundred elders out of one thousand and twelve hundred monks who gathered there in a conference. These elders met at Vālukārāma. Thera Sabbakāmi, questioned by Thera Revata, recited the *Vinaya*, and the dispute on the Ten Points was set at rest. The monks then recited the entire *Dhamma* (Doctrine) and *Vinaya* (discipline). This Second Council was concluded after eight months.

CHAPTER III : Two hundred and eighteen years after the *Parinibbāna* of the Buddha, sixty thousand heretics became envious of the gain and honour of the monks, and they, too, cutting off their hairs and putting on the yellow robes, went about the *vihāras* (monasteries), disturbed the monks in their practices, and created nuisance in the *Sāsana*. So the monks were unable to hold the *Uposatha* (sabbath) ceremony for seven years. In order to purge the *Sāsana* (religion) of its blemishes, king Asoka called the monks in an assembly in the Asokārāma under the presidency of Thera Moggaliputtatissa. Then did the king question one by one on the doctrine of the Buddha. The



heretics expounded their wrong doctrines and the king Asoka caused them to be expelled from the Order. When the *Sāsana* was thus purified, the monks met and held the *Upasatha* ceremony. Out of sixty hundred thousand monks who assembled there, Thera Moggaliputtatissa selected only one thousand learned and expert monks in order to hold a council. The Third Council was accordingly held at the Asokārāma. In that congregation Thera Moggaliputtatissa expounded the *Kathāvatthu*,¹ refuting the dissentient views. The monks recited the *Dhamma* and the *Vinaya* according to the procedure adopted in the first two Councils. The work of this Council was finished after nine months.

CHAPTER IV : After the Third Council was over, missionaries were sent by Thera Moggaliputtatissa in bands each consisting of five Theras (elders) to various places to establish the Buddha's religion. Thera Majjhantika was sent to Kasmīra and Gandhāra, Thera Mahādeva to Mahisamaṇḍala, Thera Rakkhita to Vanavāsī, Thera Dhammarakkhita to Aparāntaka, Thera Mahādhammarakkhita to Mahārāṭṭha, Thera Mahārakkhita to the Yona country, Thera Majjhima to the Himalayan region, Theras Sonaka and Uttara to Suvannabhūmi, and Thera Mahinda with his four companions—Theras Itṭiya, Uttiya, Sambala, and Bhaddasāla—to the island of Laṅkā.

¹ PTS ed., A. C. Taylor, Tr. into English by S. Z. Aung & Mrs. Rhys Davids under the title 'Points of Controversy.'



It was in the two hundred and thirty-sixth year after the *Parinibbāna* of the Buddha that Thera Mahinda reached the island of Laṅkā with four elders and a novice named Sumana, and stayed on the Missaka mountain. On that day, in Laṅkā, a festivity called *Jeṭṭhamūla* took place. King Devānampiyatissa came out of the city with a retinue of forty thousand men, and reached the Missaka mountain. At a place called the Ambatthala, he met Thera Mahinda. When they had come to know each other, they held conversation. The thera related the *Cūlahatthipadopama Sutta*,¹ and the king with his forty thousand men came unto the three Refuges. Thereafter the thera related the *Samacitta Suttanta*² at a great assembly of gods, and converted many *devas*, *nāgas*, etc. The thera, invited by king Devānampiyatissa, entered the city and the palace, and related the *Petavatthu*, the *Vimānavatthu*, and the *Saccasamyutta*.³ The king built the *Mahāvihāra* at the *Mahāmeghavana-park*, and dedicated it to the Order. Nine thousand and five hundred persons were converted at that time. The king then built for the Order the *Cetiya-pabbata-vihāra* which the Order accepted. Ariṭṭha with his fifty-five brothers received *pabbajjā* (ordination) from the thera, and became elders (*arahats*).

¹ *Majjhima*, I, pp. 175-184.

² *Aṅguttara*, I, 61 ff.

³ *Samyutta*, V, pp. 414-478.



CHAPTER V : Devānampiyatissa then caused the right collar-bone of the Buddha to be laid down in the *Thūpārāma*, and many people received *pabbajjā* on that occasion. Subsequently a branch of a Bo-tree (taken from India) was planted with due ceremony, and on that day the queen Anūlā with her many female companions received *pabbajjā* from Therī Saṃghamittā. The king's nephew (sister's son) Ariṭṭha, too, with five hundred men received ordination at that time. Under the direction of Thera Mahinda king Devānampiyatissa then arranged for a council of the monks, and built a great hall in the *Thūpārāma* for the purpose. Many monks assembled in the *Thūpārāma*. Thera Mahinda took his seat facing the South. Thera Ariṭṭha was seated on the preacher's seat facing the north. Sixty-eight theras headed by Thera Mahinda were seated round the preacher's seat. The king's younger brother Thera Mantābhaya with five hundred monks was also seated round the preacher's seat. The remaining monks including the king and their attendants were seated in their respective seats. Asked by Thera Mahinda, Thera Ariṭṭha recited the *Vinaya*. In this way, they expounded the *Dhamma* and the *Vinaya*, and held the Fourth Council. The work of this Council began on the first great *pavāraṇā*-day (the name of a festival) in the month of Kattika, and ended in an indefinite time.

CHAPTER VI : Three hundred seventy-six years after the *Parinibbāna* of the Buddha, Duṭṭha-gāmini-abhaya became the king of Laṅkā. He



built the *Maricavaṭṭi-vihāra*, the nine-storied *Lohapāsāda*, and the *Great Thūpa*, one after the other, and duly consecrated them. He reigned for twenty-four years at Anurādhapura, and then died. Fifty-seven years after the foundation of the *Great Thūpa*, Vaṭṭagāmini-abhaya reigned in Laṅkā. This king built the *Abhayagirivihāra* and a great *Cetiya* and dedicated them to the Order of monks headed by Thera Mahātissa. Thereafter the Order of monks felt the necessity of putting down the three *Piṭakas* and the *Aṭṭhakathā* in writing. The monks expressed it to the king, and the king, at their request, provided them with a hall and other necessary articles for the purpose. The Order of monks selected many thousand learned elders in order to hold a council. After rehearsing the *Dhamma* and the *Vinaya* according to the procedure adopted in the previous councils, the Order of monks caused the three *Piṭakas*, with the text and the *Aṭṭhakathā*, to be written down in books from what had been orally handed down, and held it as the Fifth Council. The writing of the three *Piṭakas* was completed in one year.

CHAPTER VII: Five hundred and sixteen years after the writing of the three *Piṭakas*, Mahānāma became the king of Laṅkā. At that time, a Brāhmaṇa youth was born in the neighbourhood of the Bo-terrace in the Middle country of Jambudīpa. Skilled in all the sciences and versed in the three *Vedas*, he went all around Jambudīpa as a great disputant. He then came to a monastery, and there he was met by Thera Revata who



convinced him of the superiority of the Buddha's doctrine, and converted him to the Buddhist faith. The Thera then taught him the three *Piṭakas*. As he was as profound in his 'ghosa' or eloquence as the Buddha, they conferred on him the appellation of Buddhaghosa or the voice of the Buddha. In that monastery he composed an original work called the *Nānodaya*¹ (the awakening of knowledge), and wrote a commentary on the *Dhammasaṅgani*, called the *Atthasālinī*.² Under the direction of Thera Revata, he started for Ceylon to study the Sinhalese *Aṭṭhakathā*, and compile a *Paritta-aṭṭhakathā* or general commentary on the three *Piṭakas*. On his way he reached *Nāgapattana*, and there he boarded a ship. He, on his way, met Thera Buddhadatta on the great ocean, and held conversation with him. He reached the island of Laṅkā in the reign of King Mahānāma, and there at the *Mahāpadhāna Hall* in the *Mahāvihāra* at Anurādhapura he met Thera Saṃghapāla. There he listened to the *Aṭṭhakathā* and the *Theravāda*, became thoroughly convinced of the true meaning of the Buddha's doctrine, and then sought the permission of the Order of monks to translate the *Aṭṭhakathā*. The Order of monks, for the purpose of testing his qualifications, gave him only two *gāthās* out of which he composed the commentary called the *Visuddhimagga*. The gods rendered that book invisible. He recomposed a second copy, and this,

¹ & ² Vide Law, *Buddhaghosa*, p. 17; *Cūlavamsa*, Ed. Geiger, PTS, p. 18.



too, did the gods make invisible. When he recomposed a third copy, the gods restored the other two copies also. Buddhaghosa, taking the three copies, presented them to the Order of monks. They found the three copies same in all respects, and rejoiced at his success. They gave him the texts of the three *Piṭakas* and also the Sinhalese commentaries. Buddhaghosa took all those books, and taking up his residence in the *Padhānaghara* on the southern side of the *Mahāvihāra*, translated all the Sinhalese commentaries of the three *Piṭakas* and of the entire *Theravāda* into *Māgadhi* (Pāli). Thereafter the object of his mission being fulfilled, he returned to Jambudīpa to worship the great Bo-tree.

CHAPTER VIII: Six hundred and eighty-three years after the translation of the *Aṭṭhakathā* of the three *Piṭakas*, Parakkamabāhu became a sovereign-king of Laṅkā. One thousand one hundred and fifty-four years after the reign of Vaṭṭagāmini-Abhaya, he found the *sāsana* decaying. Under the leadership of Thera Mahākassapa of Udumbaragiri, he caused many hundred monks to be expelled from the Order, and made the *Sāsana* purified. He built many *vihāras* (monasteries) and *cetiya*¹ (shrines) at *Jetavana*, *Pubbārāma*, *Dakkhiṇārāma*, *Uttarārāma*, *Veluvana*, *Kapilavatthu*, *Isipatana*, *Kusinārā*, and *Laṅkātilaka*. He then erected a great *Uposatha Hall* having nine

¹ B. C. Law, *A note on the cetiya in Buddhist Lit.*, published in *Studia Indo-Iranica*, Ehrengabe für W. Geiger, 1931; Law, *Geography of Early Buddhism*, Appendix.



stories and one thousand compartments, decorated with a tower, and rich in paintings, and creeper-works. He adorned the *Jetavanavihāra* with rows of Bo-trees, *stūpas*, cells, huts, halls and beautiful tanks and gardens. It was under his patronage that the Order of monks headed by Thera Mahākassapa compiled in Māgadhī the *Atthavaṇṇanā* of the *Aṭṭhakathā* of the *Piṭakas*. The following *Atthavaṇṇanās* (sub-commentaries) are mentioned by name :—

1. *Sāratthadīpanī*—The *Atthavaṇṇanā* of the *Samantapāsādikā*, the *Aṭṭhakathā* of the *Vinaya*.
2. *Sāratthamañjusā* (1)—the *Atthavaṇṇanā* of the *Sumaṅgalavilāsinī*, the *Aṭṭhakathā* of the *Dīgha-Nikāya*.
3. *Sāratthamañjusā* (2)—the *Atthavaṇṇanā* of the *Papañcasūdanī*, the *Aṭṭhakathā* of the *Majjhima-Nikāya*.
4. *Sāratthamañjusā* (3)—the *Atthavaṇṇanā* of the *Sāratthappakāsinī*, the *Aṭṭhakathā* of the *Samyutta-Nikāya*.
5. *Sāratthamañjusā* (4)—the *Atthavaṇṇanā* of the *Manorathapūraṇī*, the *Aṭṭhakathā* of the *Aṅguttara-Nikāya*.
6. *Paramatthappakāsinī* (1)—the *Atthavaṇṇanā* of the *Atthasālinī*, the *Aṭṭhakathā* of the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*.
7. *Paramatthappakāsinī* (2)—the *Atthavaṇṇanā* of the *Sammohavinodanī*, the *Aṭṭhakathā* of the *Vibhaṅga*.



8. *Paramatthappakāsinī* (3)—the *Atthavaṇṇanā* of the *Paramatthadīpanī*, the *Aṭṭhakathā* of the remaining five books of the *Abhidhamma-Piṭaka*.

This compilation of the sub-commentaries was completed in one year.

CHAPTER IX : The text of the three *Piṭakas* contains one thousand one hundred and eighty-three chapters, innumerable syllables and letters. The whole *Aṭṭhakathā* of the *Piṭakas*, as expounded by Buddhaghosa, contains one thousand one hundred and sixty-three chapters, two lac nine *nahuta* seven hundred and fifty syllables, as well as ninety-three lac and four thousand letters. The *Ṭīkā* of the three *Piṭakas* contains six hundred and thirty-two chapters, one hundred and fifty-eight thousand syllables as well as fifty hundred and fifty-six thousand letters. Other books compiled by the *theras*, are then mentioned as follows :—

BOOKS	AUTHORS
1. <i>Visuddhimagga</i>	Buddhaghosa
2. <i>Kaṅkhāvitaraṇī</i> , Or <i>Aṭṭhakathā</i> of the <i>Pātimokkha</i>	
3. <i>Khuddakasikkhā</i>	
4. <i>Abhidhammāvatāra</i>	Dhammasiri
5. <i>Paramatthavinicchaya</i>	Buddhadatta
6. <i>Abhidhammatthasaṃgaha</i>	Anuruddha
7. <i>Saccasaṃkhepa</i>	(in the city of Kāñcīpura)
8. <i>Khema</i>	a disciple of theras
	Ānanda
	Khema



BOOKS	AUTHORS
9. <i>Samghanandī</i>	Kaccāyana
10. <i>Samghanandī-Tīkā</i>	{ Vimalabodhi & Brahma-putta
11. <i>Rūpasiddhi</i>	Buddhappiya
12. <i>Abhidhānappadīpikā</i>	Moggallāna
13. <i>Jinālaṅkāra</i>	Buddharakkhita
14. <i>Jinacarita</i>	Medhaṅkara
15. <i>Paramatthamañjūsā, a Tīkā of Visuddhimagga</i>	Dhammapāla
16. <i>Vinayasamgaha</i>	Sāgaramati
17. <i>Nissayatthakathā, a Vaṇṇanā of Saccasamkhepa</i>	{ Mahābodhi
18. <i>Mukhamāttakathā, a Vaṇṇanā of Paramatthavinicchaya</i>	
19. <i>Paramatthadīpanī, a Vaṇṇanā of Vimāna-Peta-vatthu</i>	Dhammapāla
20. <i>Subodhālaṅkāra</i>	{ Samgharakkhita
21. <i>Vuttodaya</i>	
22. <i>Khuddakasikkhā-Tīkā</i>	
23. <i>Sambuddhavaṇṇanā</i>	Buddhasīha
24. <i>Vinayavinicchaya</i>	Buddhanāga
25. <i>Kaṅkhāvitaraṇī-Tīkā</i>	Dhammapāla
26. <i>Paramatthadīpanī, an Aṭṭhakathā of Therīgāthā</i>	
27. <i>Abhidhammatthasamgaha-Tīkā</i>	A disciple of Sāriputta
28. <i>Dhammapada-Aṭṭhakathā</i>	Buddhaghosa
29. <i>Nettipakarana</i>	Kaccāyana
30. <i>Sāratthasālinī, a vaṇṇanā of Saccasamkhepa</i>	A disciple of Sāriputta

CHAPTER X : Thereafter the advantage of writing the three *Piṭakas* is related. The eighty-four thousand units of *Dhamma*, set up by the Buddha, have by themselves taken the place of the Teacher as eighty-four thousand self-born Buddhas.



Each letter in the *Piṭakas* should be considered as having merit equal to Buddha representation. Therefore, a wise man should write down the three *Piṭakas* or cause them to be written down in a book, or in a memorial in honour of the *Dhamma*. He who writes down the three *Piṭakas*, fulfils all meritorious deeds, and becomes free from all sufferings. He is reborn perfect in a higher life, and prospers always in happiness, wealth, enjoyment, fame, and the rest. He grows everywhere and in all respects. Even he obtains the *Sambuddhahood* and the highest bliss of *Nibbāna*. Really speaking, this chapter sets forth the main purpose of this work, namely, giving encouragement to the transcription of the three *Piṭakas* and the carving of Buddha's images. The source from which the verses are quoted as *Buddhavacana* cannot be traced.

CHAPTER XI: The *Sambuddhas* have two-fold body, one the glorious visible body, and the other the body of doctrine as preached by them. He who wishes his own welfare and greatness, should respectfully hear the preaching of the Norm. He who honours, esteems, reveres and respects the Norm is the person who honours, esteems, reveres and respects the Buddha.

The advantage of hearing the preaching of the Norm and of giving one's applause at the time of so doing is illustrated by a few stories. A brief summary is given below:

(a) Once the Buddha heard Thera Nandaka preaching the Norm and he shouted applause as



soon as the preaching was over. Asked by Thera Nandaka, the Buddha replied that he had done so out of his great veneration for the Norm.

(b) A certain person, while with his seven sons returning from the forest, heard a woman singing a song relating to birth, old age and death. They too, on reflection, realised the three things, namely, impermanence, ill, and non-soul, and attained the *Paccekabuddhahood*.¹ Thereafter they became recluses, and went to a cave at the foot of the Nanda forest in the Northern Himalayas.

(c) Once the Buddha preached the Norm to the inhabitants of Campaka. A frog made the Buddha's voice an object of its thought, but it met with its death suddenly and was reborn in a big celestial abode in the *Tāvātimsa* heaven.

(d) Once, at the entrance of a cave, Sāriputta repeated the *Abhidhamma-Piṭaka*. Five hundred bats listened to his recital. They then passed away without taking any food and were reborn in heaven. They were again reborn in this world as comrades and entering the Order, became *arahants* and reached *Nibbāna*.

(e) In the island of Sīhala, in a beautiful *vihāra*, named *Uddalolaka-vihāra*, there lived many deer, pigs and the like. A deer of that hermitage, while going to the landing place to drink water, heard the elder preaching the Norm. Then struck by a hunter it died and was reborn

¹ The state of an individual Buddha.



in the womb of the younger sister of *Thera* Abhaya, and afterwards obtained Arahantship.

(f) Once many merchants, desirous of going to the island of *Laṅkā*, boarded a sea-going vessel. As the ship went on peacefully, a monk who accompanied them, recited a portion from the scriptures. A great fish listened to the monk's recitation, but later it was killed by the people on the landing place. In consequence of its listening to the recitation of the monk, it was reborn in a wealthy family in the *Rohiṇī* country. He was later initiated as a monk and afterwards attained Arahantship.

In 1941 the University of Calcutta published my English translation of the text of *Saddhamma-saṃgaha*. Now a revised translation is published by them. I shall consider my labour amply rewarded, if it is found useful by scholars interested in Buddhism.

43, Kailas Bose Street,
Calcutta—6,
15-2-1961.

B. C. LAW



*Honour to that Exalted One, Arahant,
Buddha Supreme*

CHAPTER I

THE FIRST GREAT COUNCIL

1. Having made obeisance to the Buddha, the Doctrine, and the Order—the abode of virtue—I will present concisely the compendium of traditional history of the Good Faith.

2-3. Having completely wiped away (i.e., removed) the obstacles by virtue of the merit (acquired) through services done to the Three Jewels,¹ and having accepted the traditional accounts in the commentaries on the three *piṭakas* in all their bearings, this is compiled by a wise man for the growth of the teaching of the Lord and for inspiring confidence among the scribes of the three *piṭakas*.

¹ *Saraṇattaya* means three refuges, the Buddha, the Doctrine (*Dhamma*) and the Order (*Saṅgha*). Each of them is a supreme object of devotion and worship. The Buddha is said to have established the converts in three refuges. The usual formula by which a Buddhist takes refuge in Triad is as follows :—

Buddhaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi, Dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi and Saṅghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi. This formula is recited on all solemn occasions and is thrice repeated—*Vinaya Mahāvagga*, p. 22. For a detailed study vide *Law, Concepts of Buddhism*, Chap. I.



4. Attend ye, all good men, present here, being willing to hear, to the presentation of the "Compendium of traditional history of the Good Faith", complete and clear.

To explain the matter, this is the connected story.

More than a hundred thousand aeons and four *asamkheyyas* (countless ages) ago, when our Lord, still a *Bodhisatta*, had obtained the prophecy of the twenty-four Buddhas (in succession), and had mastered equally all the thirty perfections,¹ he reached the climax in his progress towards wisdom.

Having lived for forty-five years after his enlightenment, formulated eighty-four thousand units of text, delivered to the other shore countless beings from the difficult path of existence and fulfilled all the duties of a Buddha till the ordina-

¹ *Pārami* or *Pāramitā* means perfection, completeness or the highest state. The *Bodhisatta* (one who is destined to be a Buddha) had to fulfil ten perfections to attain *bodhi* or enlightenment. He had to undergo several births to fulfil each *pāramitā* or perfection. The *pāramitās* in Theravāda Buddhism are ten in number, e.g., charity (*dāna*), morality (*sīla*), renunciation (*nekkhamma*), resolution (*adhiṭṭhāna*), truth (*sacca*), friendliness (*mettā*), indifference (*upekkhā*), forbearance (*khanti*), energy (*virīya*) and wisdom (*paññā*). In the Introduction to the *Jātaka commentary* (Vol. I), these ten *pāramitās* are the *Buddhakāraḍādharmā* (the precepts which make one Buddha). Siddhārtha before attaining enlightenment found these *pāramitās* to be the only means of attaining Buddhahood. He fulfilled these perfections. The *Cariyāpiṭaka* gives a brief account of how he fulfilled them. The *Jātaka* shows that the Bodhisatta Siddhārtha had to undergo 550 births to fulfil the ten perfections. The *Cariyāpiṭaka* points out that he had to undergo 35 births to fulfil seven of the ten perfections (For a detailed study vide Law's second and revised edition of the *Cariyāpiṭaka*, pp. 11-13; Law, *Concepts of Buddhism*, Chap. II).



tion of Subhadda,¹ the Wanderer, he passed away at Kusinārā, lying on the death-bed between the Sāla trees.²

To this effect said the Ancients :³

5 & 6. "In olden times, the Great Hero, having offered homage to the twenty-four *Sambuddhas*,⁴ Dīpaṅkara and the rest, and having received from them the prophecy of his (future) Buddhahood, when he had fulfilled all perfections, and had reached the highest enlightenment, the sublime Buddha Gotama, set free the world from suffering."⁵

7. When he had accomplished his duties befitting all *Sambuddhas*, and had reached the tranquil state, the leader of the World, passed away on his death-bed.

¹ Subhadda was the last disciple to be converted by the Buddha (*Dīgha*, II, 148 ff.; *Khuddakapāṭha-aṭṭhakathā*, p. 89, *Milinda*, p. 130; *Sumaṅgalavilāsinī*, II, 590). He was a wanderer (*paribbājaka*).

² cf. *Dīgha*, II, Chs. 5 & 6.

³ Buddhaghosa speaks of the *Porāṇas* (ancients) or *Porāṇa-kattheras* (ancient elders) in connection with those who learnt the *Dhamma* (norm) from their teachers and maintained their views. They had no dogmatic views of their own (*Visuddhimagga*, PTS, p. 99). According to the *Gandhavyaṃsa* (JPTS, 1886, pp. 58 ff.) they were the *therās* or elders who took part in the proceedings of the first three Buddhist Councils and who were evidently the earliest known contributors to the commentary literature. The *Porāṇācariyā* was just another name for the *Aṭṭhakathācariyā*. Buddhaghosa cites in the name of the *Porāṇas* certain traditional sayings of legendary or doctrinal character. It is difficult to say that they represented a consistent school of philosophic thought (Law, *Buddhaghosa*, 1946, pp. 44 ff.).

⁴ *Sambuddhas*—thoroughly enlightened ones who knew, understood or discovered the truth.

⁵ For verses 5-6, see *Mahāvamsa*, Ch. I, vv. 10-11.



When the Exalted One, the Guide of the World had attained the *Parinibbāna*,¹ seven hundred thousand monks assembled there, and the Venerable Elder Mahākassapa, senior of the congregation, recollecting the words spoken, seven days after the Exalted One had attained the *Parinibbāna*, by Subhadda, initiated in old age, addressed the monks thus: "Friends, we should recite the *Dhamma* and the *Vinaya*." The monks replied: "Reverend Sir, be pleased then to select the elder monks." Then the Venerable Mahākassapa selected five hundred monks who were *arahants* (elders) and declared: "Friends, spending the rainy season at Rājagaha, we should recite the *Dhamma* and the *Vinaya*."

To this effect said the Ancients:

8. "Seven hundred thousand leading monks were among them, the elder Mahākassapa was at that time the senior of the congregation."²

9. Seven days after the Lord of the World, gifted with the Ten Powers,³ had attained the

¹ *Parinibbāna* here means death. To say that the Buddha attained *parinibbāna* is the same as to say in ordinary language that he died (*Kālaṃ akari muni-Dīgha*, II, 157). In his own words to attain *Parinibbāna* is to see the fire of life extinguished in that elemental condition of extinction which allows no residuum of possibility for re-ignition. The Buddhist idea of *parinibbāna* may be briefly stated that it is nothing but the natural end of life of those gifted persons who realise *nirvāṇa* in their present conscious existence (*dīṭṭheva dhamme*) — (Law, *Concepts of Buddhism*, pp. 85-86).

² *Mahāvamsa*, Ch. III, v. 4.

³ *Dasabala* is an epithet of the Buddha. The ten *balas* or forces belonging to a Buddha are ten kinds of knowledge: knowledge of the cause and non-cause: that of past, present and future *karmas*:



Parinibbāna, (the elder Mahākassapa) recalled to his mind the evil words of the aged Subhadda.¹

10. To hold the Great Council the great *Thera* appointed to this end five hundred eminent monks who had overcome sins.²

11. On the second day of the second month of the rainy season, the monks met together in that splendid hall.³

Now, on the second day, the elder monks, having finished their meals, getting ready with their robes and bowls, assembled in the meeting-place. When the monks remained thus seated there, the *thera* Mahākassapa addressed the monks :
“ Friends, which one should we recite first, the *Dhamma* or the *Vinaya* ? ”

The monks replied : “ Reverend Mahākassapa, the *Vinaya* means the life of the Buddha's own. If the *Vinaya* lasts, the Order will endure. Therefore we should recite the *Vinaya* first. ”

Making whom the leader should *Vinaya* be recited ?

“ The Venerable Upāli, ” (they) replied.

The *thera* Mahākassapa chose himself to ask questions concerning the *Vinaya*, and the *thera* Upāli himself agreed to answer them. Then the

that of the way leading to all directions ; that of diverse nature of persons ; that of inclinations of other beings ; that of senses of other beings ; that of meditation, concentration, emancipation, attainments and freedom from impurities ; that of remembering former births ; that of birth and death of beings ; that of extinction of sins.

¹ Cf. *Mahāvamsa*, Ch. III, v. 6.

² *Ibid.*, Ch. III, v. 9.

³ *Ibid.*, Ch. III, v. 26.



Venerable Upāli rose from his seat, arranged his upper robe over one shoulder (i.e., the left). Paying homage to the elder monks, and sitting in the Preacher's seat, he took hold of a fan, inlaid with ivory. Then the Venerable Mahākassapa, seated in the *thera's* seat, asked the Venerable Upāli :

“ Friend, where was the first *Pārājikā* rule promulgated ? ”

“ At Vesālī,¹ reverend Sir.”

“ With reference to whom ? ”

“ With reference to Sudinna, Kalan-daka's son.”

“ In respect of what ? ”

“ In respect of sexual intercourse.”

Thereafter the Venerable Mahākassapa asked Venerable Upāli about the subject-matter, source, person, enactment, supplementary enactment, offence, and innocence as to the first *Pārājikā* rule.

Just as to the first (*Pārājikā* rule) so as to the second, third, and fourth, (Mahākassapa) asked about their subject-matter innocence, the *thera* Upāli answered the questions as they were put to him. Thereupon they arranged the collection thus : “ Let these four *Pārājikā* rules constitute the *Pārājikā* Section.” They arranged

¹ Vaiśālī (Pali Vesālī) which was the capital of the Licchavirājās and the headquarters of the powerful Vajjian confederacy has been identified by Cunningham with the village of Basarh in the Muzafferpur District in Tirhut as marking the spot where the ancient city of Vaiśālī stood. This identification has been decisively proved by the archaeological explorations carried out on the site by T. Bloch (Law, *Tribes in Ancient India*, pp. 304, 310-11).



the thirteen *Samghādisesa* rules under 'The Section of the Thirteen', the two disciplinary rules under the section of the *Aniyata*; the thirty disciplinary • rules under that of *Nissaggiya-Pācittiya*, the ninety-two disciplinary rules under that of *Pācittiya*; the four disciplinary rules under that of *Paṭidesaniya* (those belonging to confession); the seventy-five disciplinary rules under that of *Sekhiya*; and the seven rules under that of *Adhikaraṇa-samatha*.¹ Thus they made the Collection of the *Mahāvibhaṅga*.

In the *Bhikkhuṇī-Vibhaṅga*, they arranged the eighteen disciplinary rules under the section of *Pārājika*, the seventeen rules under 'The Section of Seventeen,' thirty rules under that of *Nissaggiya-Pācittiya*, one hundred and sixty-six rules under that of *Pācittiya*, the eight rules under that of *Paṭidesaniya* (those belonging to confession), the seventy-five rules under that of *Sekhiya*, and the seven rules under that of *Adhikaraṇa-samatha*. Thus they made the collection of the *Bhikkhuṇī-Vibhaṅga*. In this way they also made the *Khandhakas* and the *Parivāra*.²

Thus the two *Vibhaṅgas*, the *Khandhakas*, and the *Parivāra* making up the collection of the *Vinaya-Piṭaka*, the elder Mahākassapa questioned, and the elder Upāli answered. At the close of questions and answers, the five hundred arahants

¹ For these terms a full discussion is found in B. C. Law's *History of Pali Literature*, Vol. I, pp. 50-60.

² This does not tally with the earlier account either in the *Cullavagga*, XI, or in the *Sumaṅgalavilāsinī*, I. General Intro.



(elders) repeated together the collection in the same manner as it was adopted. When the collection of the *Vinaya* was completed, the great earth quaked.

Then laying aside the fan, inlaid with ivory, and coming down from the preacher's seat, the venerable elder Upāli paid homage to the elder monks, and took the seat previously assigned to him.

To this effect said the Ancients :

12. "The great thera (Mahākassapa) laid on himself (the task) of asking questions touching the *Vinaya*, and elder Upāli (was ready) to explain.

13. Sitting in the elder's seat, the former asked the latter the questions touching the *Vinaya*; and the latter seated in the preacher's seat, expounded (the matter).

14. And as the best master of the *Vinaya* expounded each (clause) in turn, all (the monks) knowing the custom, repeated the *Vinaya* after him."

Then having made the collection of the *Vinaya*, the Venerable Mahākassapa wished to make the collection of the *Dhamma*, and asked the monks: "In making the collection of the *Dhamma*, making whom the leader should the *Dhamma* be recited?" The monks replied: "The elder Ānanda."

Then the Venerable Mahākassapa chose himself to ask questions concerning the *Dhamma*, and the elder Ānanda himself agreed to answer



them. The Venerable Ānanda rose from his seat, and arranged his upper robe over one (i.e., the left) shoulder. Paying homage to the elder monks and sitting in the preacher's seat, he took hold of the fan, inlaid with ivory. The elder Mahākassapa, seated in the elder's seat, questioned the elder Ānanda concerning the *Dhamma* :

“ Friend, Ānanda, where was the *Brahmajāla*¹ spoken ? ”

“ Reverend Sir, midway between Rājagaha and Nālandā in the king's garden-house at Ambalaṭṭhikā. ”

“ With reference to whom ? ”

“ With reference to Suppiya the mendicant and his pupil Brahmadaṭṭa. ”

Now the Venerable Mahākassapa also asked the Venerable Ānanda the source and person as to the *Brahmajāla Sutta*.

Thereupon (Mahākassapa) asked : “ Friend, Ānanda, where was the *Sāmaññaphala*² spoken ? ” and so on.

“ Reverend Sir, at Rājagaha, at Jīvaka's³ mango-grove. ”

“ To whom ? ”

“ To Ajātasattu, son of Vaidehī. ”

Now the Venerable Mahākassapa asked the Venerable Ānanda the source and person as to the *Sāmaññaphala Sutta*.

¹ *Dīgha*, I, pp. 1-46.

² *Dīgha*, I, pp. 47-86.

³ The celebrated physician of the Buddhist age. *Vinaya-Mahāvagga Vinayapiṭaka*, I, pp. 268 ff. ; *Vinaya-Cullavagga*, *Vinayapiṭaka*, II, pp. 119 ff.



In this way, they rehearsed the *Dīgha-Nikāya* comprising thirty-four suttas beginning with *Brahmajāla*. Saying "Let this be called the *Dīgha-Nikāya*", they entrusted it to the care of the Venerable Ānanda, and spoke thus: "Friend, please recite it among your followers."

Thereafter they rehearsed the *Majjhima-Nikāya* consisting of one hundred and fifty-two suttas beginning with *Mūlapariyāya* and entrusted it to the care of the followers of Sāriputta, the captain of the *Dhamma*, and spoke thus: "Please protect it."

Thereafter they rehearsed the *Samyutta-Nikāya* containing seven thousand seven hundred and sixty-two suttas beginning with *Oghatarāṇa* and entrusted it to the care of the elder Mahākassapa and spoke thus: "Reverend Sir, please recite it among your adherents."

Thereafter they rehearsed the *Āṅguttara-Nikāya* comprising nine thousand five hundred and fifty-seven suttas beginning with *Cittapariyādāna* and entrusted it to the care of the elder Anuruddha, and spoke thus: "Please recite it among your adherents."¹

Having thereafter rehearsed the *Khuddaka-Nikāya* (small discourse), divided into fifteen different *treatises*,² to wit, *Khuddaka-pāṭha*, *Dhammapada*, *Udāna*, *Itivuttaka*, *Suttanipāta*, *Vimānavatthu*, *Petavatthu*, *Theragāthā*, *Therī-*

¹ Cf. *Sumaṅgalasīlāsīnī*, I. p. 17—General Intro.

² Vide Law. *A History of Pali Lit.*, I. pp. 193 ff., for a detailed study.

gāthā, Jātaka, Nidāsa, Paṭisambhidā, Apadāna, Buddhavaṃsa, and Cariyāpiṭaka, they put it (the whole collection of suttas) down, calling it the *Suttanta Piṭaka*.

Having thereafter rehearsed the seven different (*Abhidhamma*) treatises, to wit, *Dhammasaṅgaṇi, Vibhaṅga, Dhātukathā, Puggala-paññatti, Kathāvatthu, Yamaka* and *Paṭṭhāna*,¹ they put it (the whole collection) down, calling it the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*. Thus the elder Mahākassapa questioned about all that was rehearsed, and the elder Ānanda answered. At the close of questions and answers, the five hundred Arahants (elect) repeated together the collection. When the collection of the *Dhamma* was completed, the great earth quaked.

Then laying aside the fan, inlaid with ivory, and coming down from the preacher's seat, the Venerable Ānanda paid homage to the elder monks, and took the seat previously assigned to him.

To this effect said the Ancients :

15. " Then the elder (Mahākassapa) taking (the task) upon himself questioned about the *Dhamma* him (i.e., Ānanda), the chief of those who had most often heard (the Buddha's word), him the treasure-keeper of the Great Seer (i.e., the Buddha).

16. Likewise, the elder Ānanda himself agreed, and taking his seat in the preacher's seat, expounded the whole of *Dhamma*."²

¹ Vide for details, Law, *A History of Pali Lit.*, I. pp. 303 ff.

² *Mahāvamsa*, Ch. III. vv. 34-35.





The whole of " the Buddha's Word " is to be known as one by way of essence; as twofold by way of *Dhamma* and *Vinaya*; as threefold by way of first, middle and last, and so also by way of *Piṭakas*; as fivefold by way of *Nikāyas*; as ninefold by way of *Aṅgas*; and as eighty-four-thousandfold by way of units of text.

How by way of essence is it one ?

All that the Exalted One spoke, by way of admonition or contemplation, to the gods, men, *nāgas*, *yakkhas*, and the rest, for forty-five years extending from the time of his gaining the highest wisdom up to his attainment of the *Parinibbāna*, without leaving any residuum for future existence, have only one essence, namely, the essence of emancipation. Thus by way of essence it is one.

How by way of *Dhamma* and *Vinaya* is it twofold ?

The *Vinaya-Piṭaka* means *Vinaya*, and the remaining words of the Buddha constitute *Dhamma*. Thus by way of *Dhamma* and *Vinaya* it is two-fold.

How by way of first, middle, and last is it three-fold ?

Herein :

" Long I endured the circles of rebirth,
Seeking but finding not the architect.
Rebirth continual is continual pain.
But now have I espied thee architect !
Behold, thou shall not build the house
again.



Broke are thy beams, thy pinnacle
destroyed.

Now to *Nibbāna*¹ has my mind attained,
And now in me all craving is destroyed."²

These were the first words of the Buddha. Some say: "In the *Khandhaka* (the Buddha) uttered a verse containing the song of ecstasy, namely,

'Lo ! when appear true doctrines to the saint,'³ and these were the first words of the Buddha.'" But be it known that this verse contains only the song of ecstasy, produced (in the Buddha's mind) on the occasion of his attaining to the state of omniscience on the first day of the lunar fortnight, and reflecting on the mode of causal relations with his knowledge mixed with joy.

That which was spoken at the time of the *Parinibbāna*, namely,

"Hearken now, monks, I tell you: conditioned things are subject to decay; work out your salvation with diligence,"⁴ was his last word.

Between these two (events) all that were spoken (by the Buddha) form his middle sayings.

¹ *Visaṅkhāra*—It means destruction, annihilation.

² *Dhammapada*, vv. 153-54; *Jātaka-Nidānakathā*, p. 76; *Atthasālinī* (PTS), p. 18; *The Expositor*, I, p. 22. Cf. *Pss of the Brethren*, v. 184 (which ends differently); Rhys Davids, *Buddhist Birth Stories*, 103 ff.

³ *Atthasālinī*, p. 17 (PTS); *The Expositor*, I, pp. 21 ff.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 18; *The Expositor*, I, p. 22.



Thus, by way of first, middle, and last it is threefold.

How by way of *Piṭakas* is it threefold ?

All the words of the Buddha are divided indeed into three parts : the *Vinaya-Piṭaka*, *Sutta-Piṭaka*, and *Abhidhamma-Piṭaka*.

To this effect said the Ancients :

17. In them, by the *Vinaya-Piṭaka* is meant the *Pārājika* Section, the *Pācittiya*s, the *Vibhaṅga* of the nuns, the *Mahāvagga*, the *Cullavagga*, and the *Parivāra*.

This is called the *Vinaya-Piṭaka*.

18. The collection of thirty-four suttas, divided into three books (*vaggas*), forms the *Dīgha-Nikāya*, the first in the order of enumeration.

19. The collection of one hundred and fifty-two suttas, comprising fifteen chapters, forms the *Majjhima-Nikāya*.

20. The collection of seven thousand seven hundred and sixty-two suttas forms the *Samyutta*.

21. Nine thousand and five hundred and fifty-seven—this is the number of suttas in the *Anguttara*.

22 & 23. The collection comprising fifteen divisions, to wit, *Khuddakapāṭha*, *Dhammapada*, *Udāna*, *Itivuttaka*, *Suttanipāṭa*, *Vimāna* and *Petavatthus*, *Thera-Therī* (*gāthā*), *Jātaka*, *Niddesa*, *Paṭisambhidā*, *Anadāna*, *Buddhavamsa*, and *Cariyāpiṭaka*, is considered as the *Khuddaka-Nikāya*.

This is called the *Suttantapiṭaka*.

24 & 25. The collection comprising seven divisions, to wit, *Dhammasaṅgaṇi*, *Vibhaṅga*, *Dhātukathā*, *Puggalapaññatti*, the book named *Kathāvatthu*, *Yamaka*, and *Paṭṭhāna*, is called the *Abhidhamma-Piṭaka*, taught by the perfectly Enlightened One.

This is called the *Abhidhamma-Piṭaka*.

Thus by way of *Piṭakas* it is threefold.

How by way of *Nikāyas* is it fivefold ?

There are five *Nikāyas*, to wit, the *Dīgha*, the *Majjhima*, the *Saṃyutta*, the *Aṅguttara* and the *Khuddaka*.

To this effect said the Ancients :

26. "Excluding the four *Nikāyas* beginning with the *Dīgha*, the rest of the Buddha's word is the *Khuddaka*."¹

Thus, by way of *Nikāya* it is fivefold. How by way of *Aṅgas* (types) is it ninefold ?

All the words (of the Buddha) are classified into nine types, to wit, *Sutta*, *Geyya*, *Veyyākaraṇa*, *Gāthā*, *Udāna*, *Itivuttaka*, *Jātaka*, *Abbhuta*, and *Vedalla*.

"Herein, the dual (*Sutta*-) *Vibhaṅga*, *Niddesa*, *Khandhakas*, *Parivāra*, and the rest, the *Maṅgalasutta*, *Ratanasutta*, *Nālakasutta*, *Tuvaṭṭakasutta* of the *Sutta-Nipāta*, and other words of the Tathāgata bearing the name of *Sutta* should be regarded as *Sutta*. All the *Suttas* with verses should be understood as *Geyya*. In particular, all

¹ *Sumaṅgalasīlāsini*, I, 23, General Introduction : "*thapeteḍcaturō p'ete nikāye Dīgha-ādike, tadanñam Buddhavacanam nikāyo Khuddako mato ti.*"



the chapters with verses in the *Samyutta Nikāya* form *Geyya*. The entire *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*, Suttas without verses, and other words of the Buddha not included in the eight types should be understood as *Veyyākaraṇa*, or exposition. The *Dhammapada*, the *Theragāthā*, the *Therīgāthā*, those pieces in the *Sutta-Nipāta* not called Sutta and entirely in verse, should be known as *Gāthā* (stanza). The eighty-two *Suttantas* coupled with verses expressive of religious emotions should be understood as *Udāna* (utterance).

One hundred and twelve *Suttantas* introduced with the words: 'Thus was it said by the Blessed One,' etc., should be understood as *Itivuttaka* (lit., the 'thus said'). Five hundred and fifty birth stories beginning with the *Apaṇṇaka* constitute the *Jātaka*. (Birth-story). All *Suttantas* connected with wonderful and marvellous things spoken in this way: 'There are, monks, four wonderful and marvellous things in Ānanda,' should be understood as *Abbhuta*. All *Suttantas* in the form of questions asked through repeated attainment of delight and understanding, such as the Suttas: *Cullavedalla*, *Mahāvedalla*, *Sammāditṭhi*, *Sakkapañha*, *Saṅkhārabhājanīya*, *Mahāpunṇama*, etc.¹ should be understood as *Vedalla*.² Thus by way of *Aṅgas* (types) it is ninefold.

How by way of units of text is it eighty-four thousandfold ?

¹ *Majjhima*, I, 299; *Ibid.*, III, 99; *Dīgha*, II, 263.

² *Atthasālinī*, p. 26; *The Expositor*, I, pp. 33-34.



To this effect said the Ancients :

27. Eighty-two thousand from the Buddha, and two thousand from the monk (Sāriputta)—these eighty-four thousand *Dhammas* I have learnt.

28. There are, in the *Vinaya-Piṭaka*, twenty-one thousand units (of the text), in the *Suttanta-Piṭaka* twenty-one thousand, and in the *Abhidhamma-Piṭaka* forty-two thousand.

Thus by way of units of the text in explanation it is eighty-four-thousandfold.

“ Of these, the Sutta containing one theme¹ forms one unit of the text. The Sutta containing more than one theme forms more than one unit of the text, and in such cases, units of texts are determined by the number of such themes. In verses, each query or question asked forms an unit, and each answer forms another. In the *Abhidhamma*, each trinal or dual classification, as well as each classification of conscious intervals, forms one unit of text. In the *Vinaya*, there are subjects, offence regarding the rules of conduct, tables of contents, classification of terms, interim offence, innocence, and division into triplets, wherein each portion should be understood as a unit of text.”²

Thus by way of units of text it is eighty-four-thousandfold.

¹ *Anusandhika*—It also means connection, application, a logical sequence of subjects.

² *Atthasālinī*, p. 27; *The Expositor*, I, p. 34.



The company of the self-controlled one, headed by Mahākassapa, recited the Buddha's word in these and various other divisions and arranged it after similar determination: "This is the *Dhamma*, this is the *Vinaya*", etc. And they rehearsed it in seven months. At the close of the Council the great earth, encircled by the ocean, quaked repeatedly, violently, with a vertical upheaval everywhere; and various wonders manifested themselves, as though giving congratulations with well-felt delight at the thought: "The religion of Him who was endowed with the Ten Powers, has thus, by the thera Mahākassapa, been rendered capable of lasting a period of five thousand years."¹

This is known as the First Great Council.

To this effect said the Ancients:

In this world,

29. "Whereas (this collection) was made by five hundred, therefore it was called 'That of the five hundred', and whereas it was made by the Theras (Elders), it was also called as 'That of the Theras'.

30. Thus in seven months the compilation of the *Dhamma*, to save the whole world, was done by those (*Theras*) bent on the whole world's salvation.

31. 'The elder Mahākassapa has made this religion of Sugata (the Blessed One) to endure five thousand years.'

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 27; *The Expositor*, I, pp. 34-35.



32. Rejoicing in this thought, at the close of the Council, the earth encircled by the ocean quaked six times.

33. Many wonderful signs were shown in the world in many ways. Now, since (the Canon) was compiled by the *theras*, it was called the Thera tradition.

34. The elders who held the first Council and (thereby) brought great blessing to the world, having lived their allotted span of life, entered, all, into *Nibbāna*.¹

35. Thus knowing that this life is transient and hard to win, be wise and exert yourself to attain the everlasting and immortal state.²

Here ends the Chapter, called 'The First Great Council', in the *Saddhammasamgaha*, compiled for the serene joy and emotion of the pious.

¹ *Mahāvamsa*, Ch. III, vv. 37-41; Geiger's *Great Chronicle of Ceylon*, p. 18.

² *Samantapāsādikā*. (Sinhalese Ed.), pp. 294-296.



CHAPTER II

*The Second Council*¹

Now, as days and nights, in succession, had passed, a century after the *Parinibbāna* of the Exalted One, the Vajjiputtaka monks of Vesālī promulgated at Vesālī the Ten Points.

Which were the Ten Points? (They were) :—

“(1) That storing salt in a horn vessel (in order to season unsalted foods, when received), was permissible;

(2) That taking the midday meal when the sun's shadow showed two fingers' breadth after noon, was permissible;

(3) That visiting the village after meal, and there eating again (if invited), was permissible;

(4) That holding the *Upasatha* separately by monks residing in the same boundary, was permissible;

(5) That carrying out of official acts by an incomplete chapter, in anticipation of the consent of absent monks to be obtained afterwards, was permissible;

(6) That it was permissible to do something on the precedence of the preceptor's practice;

(7) That taking unchurned milk, even after meal time, was permissible;

¹ Cf. *Cullavagga*, Ch. XII; *Vinaya Texts*, III, SBE, XX, pp. 386 ff.; *Mahāvamsa* (text & translation), Ch. IV.



(8) That it was permissible to drink unfermented toddy;

(9) That the use of a seat not of the prescribed size, if it were without fringe, was permissible;

(10) That it was permissible to accept gold and silver."

The king named Sisunāga, the son of Kālāsoka, was their adherent.

To this effect said the Ancients :

1. "At the end of the tenth year of Kālāsoka's reign a century had passed by after the *Parinibbāna* of the *Sambuddha*.

2. At that time many Vajjiputtaka monks shamelessly promulgated the Ten Points at Vesālī,"¹

At that time the venerable Yasa, the son of Kākaṇḍa(ka), who was wandering through the Vajjian country heard : "The Vajjiputtaka monks of Vesālī are said to have promulgated the Ten points." And he arrived at Vesālī, thinking : "It is not proper that I, hearing the danger in the *Sāsana* (religion) of Him who was gifted with the Ten Powers, should live inactive, let me now expound the *Dhamma*, holding back the speakers of what is not *Dhamma*." There, at Vesālī, the venerable Yasa, the son of Kākaṇḍa, stayed at the Mahāvana,² in the Kuṭāgārā Hall (pinnacled house).

¹ *Mahāvamsa*, IV, 8-9.

² Name of a *vihāra* (monastery). See E. C. Law, *Some Ksatriya Tribes of Ancient India*, pp. 46-47.



Now at that time the Vajjiputtaka monks of Vesālī, on the *Uposatha* day, filled a copper pot with water and placed it in the midst of the Order of monks and said to the lay disciples of Vesālī who happened to pass by: "Bestow on the Order a *kahāpaṇa*, or half a one, or a *pāda*,¹ or a *māsaka*, or silver. It will be wanted for the requisites of the Order." All happened till there were in this rehearsal seven hundred monks, neither more nor less. So is this rehearsal of the *Vinaya* called 'That of the seven hundred'.² And in the (previous) conference one hundred and twelve thousand monks met together. In the midst of those monks, as the Thera Sabba-kāmi, inspired by the venerable Yasa, the son of Kākaṇḍa, and questioned by the venerable Revata, —answered touching the *Vinaya*, the dispute on the Ten Points, (already) decided as desired, was settled.

Now the *theras* said: "We will recite the *Dhamma* and the *Vinaya*." They chose seven hundred monks who were arahants (elect), knew the three *Piṭakas*, and had attained mastership in analysis. Just as the thera Mahākassapa had rehearsed (the canon), so did they, sitting in the Vālukārāma and purging the *sāsana*, again recite the entire *Dhamma* and *Vinaya* by way of *Piṭakas*, *Nikāyas*, *Aṅgas* (types), and units of

¹ 'One *Pāda* = $\frac{1}{2}$ of a *Kahāpaṇa*, but double the value of *Māsaka*'; hence 'each succeeding coin marks half the value of the preceding one'. *Pali-Eng. Dict.* (PTS) s. v. *Kākaṇḍika*.

² Cf. *Vinaya-Mahāvagga*, Ch. XI, I, 15; Ch. XII, 2-9.



text. This council was concluded after eight months.

To this effect said the Ancients :

In this world,

3. "Whereas this council was completed by seven hundred, therefore is that rehearsal also called 'that of the seven hundred', and because there was another held in time past, this is called the Second.

4 & 5. The rehearsal was made famous by those *theras* who rehearsed it. Sabbakāmi and Saḷha, Revata, Khujjasobhita, Yasa, and Sāṇa-sambhuta, the six *theras* were pupils of the Thera Ānanda, and had beheld the *Tathāgata*¹ in time past.

6. Sumana and Vasabhaḡāmi, endowed with knowledge, were pupils of the Thera Anuruddha, and had beheld the *Tathāgata* in time past.

7. All those *theras*, however, who held the Second Council, had laid their burden, had accomplished their appointed tasks, and were free from sins.

8. Highly powerful were these *theras*, Sabbakāmi and the rest, and they, too, shining like the columns of fire in this world, attained the *Parinibbāna*.

¹ It is an epithet of the Buddha. Vide Law, *A History of Pali Lit.*, II., 411 ff.; *Tathāgata* by Robert Chalmers, JRAS, 1898, pp. 311 ff.; *Tathāgata* by Wallesar in the *Journal of the Taisho University*, 1930.



9. Thus knowing that this life is transient and hard to win, be wise and exert yourself to attain the everlasting and immortal state.'"¹

Here ends the chapter, called 'The Second Council' in the *Saddhammasamgaha*, compiled for the serene joy and emotion of the pious.

¹ *Samantapāsādikā*, pp. 294, 295.



CHAPTER III

THE THIRD COUNCIL

Two hundred and twenty-eight years after the *Parinibbāna* of the Sambuddha, all heretics, numbering sixty thousand, being deprived of honour and patronage, so that they had not even enough to eat, sought that honour and patronage by entering the order. Some without joining the order themselves cut off their hair, donned the yellow robes, and went about among the *vihāras*, entering the assemblies at the time of the *Uposatha* (sabbath) and other services. They wrought diverse cankers, stains, and nuisance in the *Sāsana*. Therefore, the Order of monks in the whole of Jambudīpa for seven years did not hold the *Uposatha* ceremony.¹

At that time Asoka, the righteous king, was consecrated fifteen years. The king, wishing to purge the *Sāsana* of sins, called the Order of monks together at the Asokārāma. In that congregation, the venerable thera Tissa, Moggali's son, being the senior of the Order, instructed the king in the doctrine. The king asked the teachers of other views, and discerned: "These are, none of them, (proper) monks but heretics." And having caused them to be expelled from the Order, he bestowed white lay-raiment upon them. Then the king said: "Now,

¹ *Points of Controversy*. Commentator's Intro. pp. 5 ff.; Cf. *Mahāvamsa*, V. vs. 234-35.



Sir, the *sāsana* is purged. Let the Order of monks hold the *Upasatha* ceremony." And providing a guard, he entered the city. In concord the Order assembled and held the *Upasatha* ceremony.

To this effect said the Ancients :

9. "Two hundred and twenty-eight years had passed from the *Parinibbāna* of the *Sambuddha*, when Asoka became king and lord of the earth.

10. Spending a week there in the pleasant royal park he (Moggaliputtatissa) instructed the ruler good doctrine of the *Sambuddha*.

11. In this same week, the monarch sent out two *yakkhas*, and assembled together all the monks on the earth.

12. On the seventh day he went to his own splendid park and arranged an assembly of the Order of monks in its full numbers."¹

13. The king asked all the adherents of other views the false-believers, and knowing (their views), he caused them, in all sixty thousand, to be expelled (from the Order).

14. And the king said to the elder (Tissa) :

"The Order is purged. Therefore, reverend Sir, let the Order hold the *Upasatha* ceremony."

15. Providing a guard for the Order, he entered his fair-city. In concord, the Order then held the *Upasatha* ceremony.²

In the midst of that congregation the thera Tissa, Moggali's son, presented the treatise, called

¹ For verses 10-12, see *Mahāvamsa*, Ch. V, vv. 265-67.

² For verses 14-15, see *Mahāvamsa*, Ch. V, vv. 273-74.



the *Kathāvatthu*, refuting the dissentient views. Even as the thera Mahākassapa and the thera Yasa (had held a Council) so did he (the thera Tissa), out of sixty hundred thousand monks, select one thousand monks, who were learned in the three Piṭakas, advanced in the (four) *Paṭisambhidās*¹ (analytical knowledge) and versed in the three kinds of knowledge, and the like, and did he recite the *Dhamma* and the *Vinaya* by way of *Piṭakas*, *Nikāyas*, *Aṅgas*, and units of text. Thus in reciting the *Dhamma* and the *Vinaya*, the great thera Tissa, Moggali's son, purged the *sāsana* of all its stains, and held the Third Council. At the close of the Council the great earth quaked in many ways. This Council ended in nine months.

To this effect said the Ancients :

16. "Even as the thera Mahākassapa and the thera Yasa had held the Dhamma Council, so also did the thera Tissa.

17. And in the Hall of this Council, the thera Tissa set forth the book, called the *Kathāvatthu*, for the future crushing of all dissentient views.

18. Thus was this council of the Dhamma under the protection of king Asoka ended by the thousand monks in nine months."²

19. All those theras, too, holding the Third Council and doing much good to the world, lived

¹ Kern, *Manual of Indian Buddhism*, p. 60—*Artha*, *Dharma*, *Nirukti* & *Pratibhāṇa*; vide also *Points of Controversy*, pp. 377 ff.

² For verses 16-18, see *Mahāvamsa*, Ch. V, vv. 277-79.



until the span of their lives and then entered into *Nibbāna* (perfect beatitude).

20. Thus knowing that this life is transient and hard to win, be wise and exert yourself for the attainment of the everlasting and immortal state.

Here ends the chapter, called 'The Third Council', in the *Saddhammasamgaha*, compiled for the serene joy and emotion of the pious.



CHAPTER IV

The Acceptance of the Cetiya-pabbata-vihāra

Here this is the connected story :

The thera Tissa, Moggali's son, having held this Third Council, thought thus : "Where, in future, is the *sāsana* to be well founded?" And on reflection he beheld : "(The religion) will be well founded in the western countries." Distributing the task among those monks he sent them, one here and one there. He sent the thera Majjhantika to Kasmīra and Gandhāra (saying) : "You will go to this country, and found here the *sāsana*." With similar words he sent the thera Mahādeva to Mahisamaṇḍala, the thera Rakkhita to Vanavāsī the thera Dhammarakkhita of the Yona country to Aparāntaka, the thera Mahādhammarakkhita to Mahārāṭṭha, the thera Mahārakkhita to the Yona country, the thera Majjhima to the Himalayan region, and the two theras, Sonaka and Uttara to Suvannabhūmi. He sent the thera Mahinda with his comrades, the theras Itthiya, Uttiya, Sambala, and Bhaddasāla, to the island of Laṅkā (saying) : "You will go to the island of Laṅkā, and found there the *sāsana*." And all who proceeded to different directions, went, each in a group of five only (because) in the western countries a company of five monks was declared to be sufficient for the purpose of ordination.



Hence to this effect said the Ancients :

1. "The therā Moggaliputta, the illuminator of the religion of the Conqueror, bringing the (Third) Council to an end, looked into the future.

2. He beheld the founding of the religion in border countries, and in the month of *Kattika* (*Kārtika*) he sent those theras, one here and one there.

3. The therā Majjhantika he sent to Kasmīra and Gandhāra, the therā Mahādeva he sent to Mahisamaṇḍala.

4. To Vanavāsī¹ he sent the therā named Rakkhita, and to Aparāntaka (the therā) named Dhammarakkhita the Yona.

5. To Mahārāṭṭha he sent the therā named Mahādhammarakkhita, but the therā Mahārakkhita he sent to the country of the Yonas.

6. He sent the therā Majjhima to the Himalayan region, and to Suvannabhūmi he sent the two theras, Sona and Uttara.

7. The great therā Mahinda and his disciples—the theras Itthiya, Uttiya, Sambala and Bhaddasāla—

8. These five theras he sent with the charge : "You will found, in the delightful island of Laṅkā, the delightful Rule of the Conqueror."²

Charged by his teacher and by the Order of monks : "You will go to the island of Laṅkā, and

¹ Identified with North Canara. According to Bühler it was situated between the ghats, Thungabhadra & Baroda (Law, *Geography of Early Buddhism*, p. 66).

² *Mahāvamsa*, Ch. XII, vv. 1-8.

found there the religion'', the *thera* Mahinda, however, pondered: ''Is it the proper time now to go to the island of *Laṅkā*?'' Then Sakka, king of the gods, approached the *thera*, and said thus: ''Reverend Sir, king Muṭasiva is dead; now reigns the great king Devānampiyatissa. And by the *Sammāsambuddha* have you been predicted: 'In future, a monk named Mahinda will convert the island of *Laṅkā*'. Therefore, Reverend Sir, this is the fitting time to go to the excellent island. I, too, shall be your helper''.¹

To this effect said the Ancients :

9. ''At that time the *thera* named Mahinda was the senior of the Order. There were the four (other) *theras*—*Itṭhiya*, *Uttiya*, *Bhaddasāla* and *Sambala*.

10. And (there were) the miraculously gifted *sāmaṇera* Sumana, mighty in the six supernormal powers, and the lay disciple *Bhaṇḍuka*, the seventh among them, who had discerned the truth.

11. They, like royal swans in the sky, were sent forth from the island of Jambu. Thus the *theras* rose up and alighted on the most excellent city.

12. In front of the best city, on the peak of a mountain which resembled the clouds, they stayed, as do the swans high above in the sky''.²

Let it be known that in the two hundred and thirty-sixth year after the *Parinibbāna* of the

¹ Cf. *Mahāvamsa*, Ch. XIII, vv. 1-2; 15-16; *Samantapāsādikā*, p. 319.

² For verses 9-12, cf. *Dīpavamsa*, Ch. XII, vv. 36-40.



Sammāsambuddha the venerable thera Mahinda who had thus come with Itṭhiya, and the rest, and stayed on the Missaka-mountain,¹ gained a footing in this island.

And on that day, in the island of Laṅkā, the festival called Jeṭṭamūla, took place. Announcing the festival and commanding his ministers: "Celebrate the festival", the great king Devānampiyatissa came out of the city with a retinue of forty thousand men, and being desirous of enjoying the pleasure of the chase, went to the place where the Missaka-mountain was. Now, a deity residing on that mountain thought: "I will make the theras visible to the king", "I will make the theras visible to the king", and assuming the form of a red deer, began to roam, eating the grass as it were, not far from the king. Then the king struck (a sound) at his bowstring. Along the way to the Ambatthala the deer began to flee. Pursuing closely the king ascended the Ambatthala.² The deer, too, disappeared at a place not far from the theras. When the thera Mahinda had beheld the king drawing near, he resolved: "Let the king alone see me, not others", and said: "Tissa, Tissa, come here". On hearing this, the king thought: "There is none born in this island who can address me by my name, but this shaven-headed fellow wearing the yellow patch-work garment addresses

¹ It is the modern Mihintala mountain, east of Anurādhāpura in Ceylon.

² It is immediately below the Mihintala mountain in Ceylon.



me by my name. Who then shall be human or not human?"

The therā (elder) replied :

"Samaṇas are we, O great king, disciples of the king of righteousness. From compassion towards you are we come here from the island of Jambu."

As soon as the king heard the therā's word, he instantly laid his arrow aside and, while speaking in friendly term, took his seat on one side.

As it has been said :

"The king laying his arrow aside took his seat on one side, and as he was seated, he exchanged friendly greetings connected with varied meanings."

At the very moment those forty thousand men came and surrounded the king. Then to him the therā showed the six other persons also. When the king had beheld these, he asked : "When did these come here?" "(They came) with me, O great king". "But are there now in the island of Jambu also other *samaṇas* like these?" "There are, O great king. The island of Jambu is now-a-days glowing with yellow robes and stirred by the wind of saints." So saying he uttered this verse :

"Great is the number of disciples of the Buddha who are *arahants* (elders), learned in the three kinds of knowledge, gifted with the supernatural powers, skilled in reading the thoughts of others and free from sins."

"Reverend Sir, by what way are you come here?" (And since the answer was :) "Neither by water nor by land, O great king", the king under-



stood that they had come through the air. The thera put a question on the simile of a mango, and the king answered.

Thinking: "The king is wise, and will be able to understand the *Dhamma*", the elder then recited the *Cūlahatthipadopama Sutta*.¹ At the end of the discourse the king with the forty thousand beings came unto the three refuges. "Reverend Sir, tomorrow I will send a chariot. Please mount that chariot and come." So saying, the king paid him homage and departed.

No sooner had the king departed than the elder ordered the *sāmaṇera* (novice) Sumana: "Sumana, come. Announce the time of hearing the preaching of the *Dhamma*." "How far, Reverend Sir, shall I make the time to be heard when I announce it?" "Over all the island of *Laṅkā*." "It is well, Reverend Sir", replied the *sāmaṇera*, and he, entering the fourth stage of meditation, based on apperception, rose up, fixed his attention and with his mind concentrated and announced thrice the time of hearing the preaching of the *Dhamma*, making it audible over the whole of the island of *Laṅkā*.

When the king heard this sound, he sent a message to the elders (asking): "Reverend Sir, has there been any trouble? There was no trouble for us, as we wish to preach the word of the Buddha, we have announced (the time) of hearing the preaching."

¹ *Majjhima-Nikāya*, I. pp. 175-84.



When the earth-gods heard the summons of the *sāmaṇera*, they echoed it, in this way the call rose up (gradually) to Brahmā's heaven. Because of the summons there came together a great assembly of gods. When the elder had beheld this great assembly of gods, he recited the *Samacitta Suttanta*.¹ At the end of the discourse the gods without number were converted to the doctrine, and many *nāgas* and *supaṇṇas* came unto the refuges.

When the night had passed, the king sent a chariot for the elders. The charioteer, keeping the chariot on one side, informed the elders: "Reverend Sirs, the chariot is brought; mount and we will drive (to the city)." "We will not mount the chariot; go thou, we will follow thee." Saying this, the *theras* (elders) rose into the air and descended to the east of Anurādhapura at the place where the first *cetiya* (afterwards stood). And the *cetiya*,² which was built on the spot where the elders first alighted, is called *Paṭhamaka-cetiya*, the First Shrine. The charioteer saw that the elders had come first, and had fastened girdles and put on robes. As he saw, he was very much gladdened at heart, came and informed the king: "Lord, the elders are come." The king enquired: "Did they mount the chariot?" "They did not, lord. Moreover, they starting after me have come earlier, and are staying at the eastern gate." The

¹ *Aṅguttara-Nikāya*, I, pp. 61 ff.

² *Saṃyutta-Nikāya*, V, pp. 414 ff.



king, too, went, paid homage to the elders, took the alms-bowl from the elder Mahinda's hand, and with great honour and homage led the elders into the city and into the palace.

The elder, seeing the immovable seat prepared, and thinking, "the religion of our Teacher will be founded all over the island of Laṅkā, as this immovable seat on the earth, took his seat".

The king himself served the elders with excellent rice-soup and with food hard and soft. The elder having finished the meal, recited the *Peta-vatthu*, the *Vimānavatthu*, and the *Saccasamyutta*¹ causing the shower of jewels of the *Dhamma*, so to speak, to the king and his attendants. The five hundred women, hearing the preaching of the doctrine by the elder, attained to the first stage of sanctification (i.e., *Sotāpatti*). At the end of the preaching of the *Dhamma*, in the evening, the ministers led the elders to the great Meghavana-park.¹ The elders stayed in the Meghavana-park. When the night had passed, the king, too, visited the elders and asked about the comfort in their rest. He also asked: "Is an *ārāma* (hermitage) allowed to the Order of monks?" The thera replied: "It is allowed, O great king." The king being pleased, and taking a golden vase, poured water over the hand of the elder and dedicated the great Meghavana-park. As the water fell (on the ground), the earth quaked. For a week the elder preached the *Dhamma*. Nine thousand

¹ It stretched south of the capital city of Anurādhāpura.



five hundred persons were converted. The elder went to the Cetiya mountain, and the king also came there.

That very day, a minister named Ariṭṭha with his fifty-five elder and younger brothers, after paying homage to the king, said thus : "Lord, I wish to receive the *pabbajjā* (ordination) from the thera." The king gave him permission (saying) : "It must be well said, receive the *pabbajjā*", and made the thera agree. On that same day the thera conferred the *pabbajjā*. All these men attained to Arahantship even in the shaving hall.

To this effect said the Ancients :

13. "When the king, on the same day, had made a beginning with the work of building sixty-eight rock-cells about (the place where) the Kaṇṭaka-cetiya (afterwards stood),

14. he returned to the city ; but the elders remained in that spot, going at the appointed time, full of compassion (for the people), to the city to beg alms there.

15. When the work on the rock-cells was finished on the full-moon day of the month of Āsāḍha, the king came and gave the *vihāra* to the elders as a consecrated offering.

16. When the elder, who had passed beyond the boundaries (of evil), had established the boundaries for the thirty-two *mālakas* (circular enclosures)¹ and the *vihāra*, then did he, on the very same day,

¹ *Mālaka* means circular enclosure, yard, tarrace, consecrated enclosure. Cf. *Dīpaṇ.* (Law's Ed.), Ch. 14, v. 78; *Mahāv.*, 15, 192.



17. in the Tumbaru-mālaka, which was marked out as the first of all, confer the *upasam-padā*¹ on all those who were weary of the *pabbajjā*.²

18. And these sixty-two *arahants* (elders), during the rainy-season, taking up their abode all together on the Cetiya-mountain,³ showed favour to the king (by their teaching)⁴.

Here ends the chapter, called 'The Acceptance of the Cetiypabbatavihāra', in the *Saddhamma-samgaha*, compiled for the serene joy and emotion of the pious.

¹ It is the fullest possible admission to the privileges of the Buddhist priesthood.

² It means monastic life.

³ It is the later name of the Missaka mountain in Ceylon.

⁴ *Mahāvamsa*, Ch. XVI, vv. 12-17; for translation see Geiger, *Ibid.*, p. 115.



CHAPTER V

The Fourth Council

Thereafter on the day when the relics of the right collar-bone (of the Buddha) were laid down in the Thūpārāma, those monks who coming from the city had received the *Pabbajjā*, numbered thirty thousand in all. Then on the day, when the great Bo-tree was planted, the queen Anulā with five hundred maidens and five hundred women of the harem, thus numbering a thousand of the womenfolk, having received the *Pabbajjā* from the Therī Saṃghamittā, attained, in no time, to arahantship with her retinue. The king's nephew (sister's son) Ariṭṭha, too, with five hundred men having received the *Pabbajjā* from the elder, attained to Arahantship shortly.

Then the king asked the thera Mahinda :¹ "Is the *sāsana* (religion) established in the island of Laṅkā, Reverend Sir?" "It is established, O great king : but the roots of the *sāsana* have not as yet descended." "Reverend Sir, when will the roots be called as descended?" "Only when a son, born of the parents inhabiting the island of Laṅkā, having received the *Pabbajjā* and having acquired the *Vinaya* in the island of Laṅkā, recites it, shall the roots of the *sāsana* be called as descended." "Is there, Reverend Sir, such a monk?" "There is, O great king, a monk named Ariṭṭha

¹ Cf. *Samantapāsādikā*, pp. 341-43.



the great, who is able in this respect." "In this connection, Reverend Sir, what should be done by me?" "A hall is to be built, O great king."

"It is well", replied the king. And at the place where the *pariveṇa*¹ built by the minister Meghavaṇṇābhaya stood, when he with his royal might had a hall built like that built by the great king Ajātasattu at the time of the Great Council, and had all the musicians engaged to display their respective skill, he thought: "We will see the *sāsana* descending", and being attended by many thousands of his people reached the *Thupārāma*.²

At that time one thousand monks assembled in the *Thūpārāma*. Facing the south a seat was prepared for the great therā Mahinda. The preacher's seat facing the north was prepared for the great therā Ariṭṭha. Now, asked by the therā Mahinda, the great therā Ariṭṭha, paying homage to the elder monks, took his proper seat according to his rank. Sixty-eight elders, headed by the therā Mahinda, were seated round the preacher's seat. The king's younger brother named therā Mantābhaya thought: "With utmost endurance I will learn the *Vinaya*", and he with five hundred monks remained seated also round the preacher's seat (prepared) for the great therā Ariṭṭha. And the remaining monks including the king and their attendants were seated on the seats assigned to them.

Then the venerable elder Ariṭṭha the great spoke on the source of the *Vinaya*: "At that time

¹ A cell or private chamber for a monk.

² It was a *vihāra* in Anurādhāpura (of *Mahāvamsa*, p. 324).



the Exalted Buddha was staying on (the bank of) the Verañjara, at the foot of the Nabrupucimanda.' And as the source of the *Vinaya* was spoken by the Venerable therā Ariṭṭha, there was a great sound in the sky, flashes of lightning unexpectedly shone forth, gods shouted applause and the great earth encircled by the ocean quaked. Thus when were manifested many wonders, the venerable therā Ariṭṭha, surrounded by the sixty-eight great elders who had each followers and were free from sins, with the therā Mahinda at their head, and by the sixty thousand monks besides, expounded, on the first great *pavāraṇā-day* in the month of Kattika (Kārtika), in the monastery of the *Thūpārāma*, the *Vinaya-Piṭaka* which brightens the compassion of the Teacher, explains the reasons for the Exalted One's admonitions, and removes the scuffling of actions, bodily and vocal. Even as the therā Mahākassapa and the therā Yasa, and the therā Tissa, Moggali's son, had rehearsed the *Dhamma* and the *Vinaya* by way of *Piṭakas*, *Nikāyas*, *Aṅgas*, and units of text, so did the great therā Mahinda while rehearsing the *Dhamma* and the *Vinaya*, hold the Fourth Council, making the root of the *sāsana* descended in the island of Laṅkā. When the Council came to a close, the great earth quaked in many ways. This council ended in an indefinite time.

To this effect said the Ancients :

19. "When two hundred and thirty-eight years had passed by after the attainment of the



Parinibbāna by the Sambuddha, Piyatissaka became a king.

20. Even as the thera Mahākassapa and Yasa, and Tissa had held the Dhamma Council, so also did Mahinda.

21. The best doctrine of the Conqueror, the learning (of the Scriptures), its practice and right comprehension did the great thera Mahinda

22. explain in the island of Laṅkā, and did he, the great sage of the island of Laṅkā, who was like the Teacher in Laṅkā, do many welfares to Laṅkā.

23. The sixty-eight great elders, who having utmost endurance assembled, were all leaders of separate companies, and were the disciples of the King of Righteousness.

24. They were free from sins, controlled in their senses, skilled in the three kinds of knowledge and gifted with the supernormal powers, themselves knowing the highest good preached it to the king.

25. These great sages, holding the Fourth Council and doing much good to the world, entered into *Nibbāna*, shining like the columns of fire.

26. Thus knowing that this life is transient and hard to win, be wise and exert yourself for the attainment of the everlasting and immortal state."

Here ends the chapter, called 'The Fourth Council', in the *Saddhammasaṅgaha*, compiled for the serene joy and emotion of the pious.



CHAPTER VI

The Account of the Writing of the Three Piṭakas in Books

After the attainment of the *Parinibbāna* by those *theras*, others, such as, Tissa, Danta, Kāla-sumana, Dīghasumana, and the rest, who were disciples of those *theras*, as well as the disciples of the great elder Ariṭṭha, having thus formed a succession of teachers as stated above, brought this *Vinaya Piṭaka* down to the present time.

Hence to this effect it has been said :

“After the Third Council (the *Vinaya-Piṭaka*) was carried to this island of Laṅkā by Mahinda and others. Having learnt from Mahinda, did the thera Ariṭṭha and others carry it for some time. Thereafter it has been carried successively up to the present time by their disciples through a succession of teachers.”

Where was it established? It was established among such persons in whom even as oil poured in an ivory pot does not ooze even a little, so was it complete in text and meaning, and who were mindful, of right conduct, resolute, modest, conscientious, and anxious for training. Thus it should be understood. Therefore, in order to establish the *Vinaya Piṭaka*, the *Vinaya* should be mastered by a monk anxious for training, after considering the advantage of learning it. The advantage of learning the *Vinaya* is this : A person expert in the



Vinaya-learning deserves the position of parents of the faithful sons of (good) families. This then is utilised by them for their initiation, ordination, accomplishment in all kinds of practice and good behaviour. Besides, because of his *Vinaya*-learning his own body of morality becomes well guarded and well protected; he protects those monks who are scrupulous by nature; in the Order, he is known as self-possessed; he reasonably holds back his opponents to complete suppression. And whatever good deeds based upon self-restraint have been explained by the Exalted One, a person expert in the *Vinaya* inherits those deeds, for they are based upon the norm of good conduct.

This was also said by the Exalted One :

Discipline is for the purpose of restraint, which is for the purpose of absence of remorse, which is for the purpose of gladness, which is for the purpose of rapture, which is for the purpose of repose, which is for the purpose of bliss, which is for the purpose of concentration, which is for the purpose of knowing and seeing the truth, which is for the purpose of disgust, which is for the purpose of dispassion, which is for the purpose of emancipation, which is for the purpose of knowing and seeing emancipation, which is for the purpose of birthless *Parinibbāna*. For such purpose is the discourse (on the Discipline), for such purpose is the consultation, for such purpose is the groundwork, for such purpose is the attentiveness, namely, the emancipation of the mind devoid of grasping.



Therefore, one should exert for the Vinaya-learning.

To this effect has it been said :

1. "The king Devānampiyatissa, lord of Laṅkā, virtuous and wise, reigned forty years.

2. After his death, his younger brother, known as Uttiya, became ruler and ruled in splendid Anurādhapura.

3. Mahānāga, the Vice-regent, Yaṭāla of great might, Goṭṭhābhaya of great merit, and Kākavanna the energetic.

4. These four kings as (his) sons and grandsons, reigned successively with piety in pleasant Mahāgāma."

Three hundred seventy-six years after the attainment of the *Parinibbāna* by the Exalted One, the great king Duṭṭhagāmini-abhaya gained sovereignty over the island of Laṅkā. When he had built the Maricavaṭṭi-vihāra, he made the Lohapāsāda nine-storied. When he had completed the Great Thūpa overlaid with gem-dusts, he assembled the monks among whom the *arahants* were ninety-six koṭis, and bestowed (on them) a great gift. When he had reigned piously and justly twenty-four years in Anurādhapura he was reborn as one awakened from sleep, in the *Tusita heaven*¹ at the expiry of his life term. At that time, the Order of monks residing in the island of Laṅkā mastered the entire saying of the Buddha, comprised in the three Piṭakas, with text and the commentary

¹ Law, *Heaven and Hell in Buddhist Perspective*, pp. 7, 18, etc.



thereon, which for the growth of the religion was orally handed down through a succession (of teachers).

To this effect said the Ancients :

5. "When two hundred seventy-six years had passed since the attainment of the *Parinibbāna* by the Sambuddha, Duṭṭagāmini became king.

6. Duṭṭhagāmini-abhaya, lord of Laṅkā, virtuous and wise, reigned in Laṅkā twenty-four years.

7. Thus the lord of the earth, doing many meritorious deeds, was, after the dissolution of his body, reborn with knowledge in the Tusita heaven."

(The story of the birth of great king Duṭṭhagāmini-abhaya.)

When fifty-seven years had passed since the founding of the Great Thūpa, the great King Vaṭṭagāmini-abhaya reigned in the island of Laṅkā. When this king had built a great vihāra at the Abhayagiri, he erected in that *vihāra* a great cetiya to the extent of the Great Thūpa, with a relic (chamber), and dedicated it to the Order of monks headed by the Thera Mahātissa.

At that time the Order of monks residing in the island of Laṅkā realised that there would be the decline of the *sāsana* and of the people, and in the Mahāvihāra came together all the monks who were expert in the *Dhamma*, expert in the *Vinaya*, learned, and advanced in analytic insight. Then the great king Vaṭṭagāmini-abhaya went to the Mahāvihāra and approached the Order of monks. Having approached, he paid homage to the Order



of monks and took his seat on one side. Then the Order of monks said to the king : "O great king, the entire saying of the Buddha comprised in the three *Piṭakas*, with the text and the commentary thereon, which was orally handed down through a succession (of teachers), has been even now handed down orally. In future, there will be the decline of the *sāsana* (religion) and of the people and the entire saying of the Buddha, comprised in the three *Piṭakas* with the text and the commentary thereon, will be lost. Therefore, the entire saying of the Buddha, comprised in the three *Piṭakas*, with the text and the commentary thereon, should now be written down in books." "Reverend Sir, what should be done by me in this matter?" "A hall should be built and all the leaves should be provided for the books, O great king." "It is well, Reverend Sir," replied the king. And in the Mahāvihāra when he with his royal might had a hall built like that built by the great king Ajātasattu at the time of the Great Council, and had all the leaves provided for books, he caused highly precious seats to be laid down in the middle of the hall and bade his people inform the Order of monks : "My work is finished, Reverend Sir."

Then out of monks who were many hundred thousands in number, the Order of monks chose many thousand elder monks, expert in the learning of the three *Piṭakas*, advanced in analytic insight, able to refute the threefold knowledge (of the Vedas), and the like. Then the elder monks took their respective seats assigned to them. Even as



the thera Mahākassapa and the thera Yasa, and the thera Tissa, and the thera Mahinda while rehearsing the *Dhamma* and the *Vinaya* had rehearsed them by way of *Piṭakas*, *Nikāyas*, *Aṅgas*, and units of text, so did the Order of monks while causing the *Dhamma* and the *Vinaya* to be written down in books from what had been orally handed down, cause the Buddha's saying, comprised in the three *Piṭakas* and known as the *Dhamma* and the *Vinaya*, with the text and the commentary thereon, to be written down in books, and hold it as the Fifth Council enabling the *sāsana* to endure a period of five thousand years. When the writing of the *Dhamma* was completed, the great earth quaked in many ways. This writing of the three *Piṭakas* was completed in one year.

To this effect said the Ancients :¹

8. When four hundred and thirty-three years had passed since the attainment of the *Parinibbāna* by the Sambuddha, Vaṭṭagāmini became king.

9. The Order of monks who resided in Laṅkā looking at the future, found that there would be the falling away of beings, and the monks then came together.

10. All of them were expert in the three *Piṭakas* advanced in analytic insight, free from sins, self-controlled, and highly skilled in the *Vinaya*.

¹*Cf. Dipavaṃsa*, Ch. XX, 20-24; for verses 12, 21, see *Mahāvamsa*, Ch. XXXIII, vv. 100, 102.



11. In that Mahāvihāra, the elder monks assembled and took their respective seats assigned to them according to their ranks.

12. The text of the three *Piṭakas* and the commentary thereon did the most wise monks hand down orally in former times.

13. As recited in the Councils, all the three *Piṭakas* did these elders rehearse together with the commentary thereon.

14. In order that the doctrine might endure long and the *sāsana* might prosper, (they were) made capable of lasting a period of five thousand years.

15. The entire *Vinaya*, as recited, did the *theras*, skilled in the *Vinaya*, cause to be written down in books.

16. The entire *Sutta-Piṭaka*, as recited, did the *theras*, skilled in the *Suttanta*, cause to be written down in books.

17. And the *Abhidhamma-Piṭaka*, as recited, did the *theras*, skilled in the *Abhidhamma*, cause to be written down in books.

18. The entire Theravāda and the entire commentary thereon did they hand down orally and cause them to be written down in books.

19. When the writing was completed, the great earth quaked, and various wonders manifested themselves in many ways in this world.

20. All these elders having written down the three *Piṭakas* and doing much good to the world, lived their allotted span of life and entered into *nibbāna*.



21. Thus did Vaṭṭagāmini-abhaya reign in Laṅkā for twelve years, and, at the beginning, five months.

22. Thus the lord of the earth doing many meritorious deeds, was, after the dissolution of his body, reborn in heaven with knowledge.

23. Thus knowing that life is transient and hard to win, be wise and exert yourself to attain the everlasting and immortal state.

Here ends the Chapter, called 'The Account of the writing of the Three *Piṭakas* in Books,' in the *Saddhammasaṃgaha*, compiled for the serene joy and emotion of the pious.



CHAPTER VII

The Account of the Translation of the Atthakathā on the Three Piṭakas

Five hundred and sixteen years after the writing of the three *Piṭakas*, a king named Mahānāma reigned in the island of Laṅkā. At that time, a young brāhmaṇa was born in a brāhmaṇa family in the neighbourhood of the Bo-terrace in the Middle country in Jambudīpa. Skilled in all the sciences and versed in the three *Vedas*, he wandered through villages, towns, countries, and cities in Jambudīpa, and wherever learned men, *Samaṇas*, and *Brāhmaṇas*, lived, he would visit those places and discuss (with them). Questions asked by him, others were not able to explain, but he would answer questions put by others. Thus going all around *Jambudīpa*, he came to a *viḥāra*. In that *viḥāra* lived many hundred monks. The senior of the Order of those monks was a venerable elder named Revata¹, the foremost of those who were free from sins, possessed of analytical insight, and capable of crushing the views of their opponents. Now the young brāhmaṇa repeating a hymn day and night, became perfect in all its component parts. Then the *thera* listened to the recitation of the *brāhmaṇa*, and thought thus: "This brāhmaṇa is of profound knowledge. It behoves me to convert him." The

¹ cf. *Sāsaṇvaṃsa* (PTS), p. 30.



thera addressing him, said thus: "O *brāhmaṇa*, who is that who is braying like an ass?" The *brāhmaṇa* replied: "O recluse, you know not then the meaning conveyed in the bray of an ass." When (the *thera*) rejoined: "Yes, I know." The *brāhmaṇa* asked the *thera* regarding all knotty points, found in the three *Vedas* and in the (fifth branch of brahmanical learning, namely), the *Itihāsa*, the sense of which neither he would find nor did his teacher realise. As usual, the *thera* became versed in the three *Vedas*, but then as he was possessed of analytical insight, it was not a difficult thing for him to answer those questions, and when he had answered those questions then and there, he asked the *brāhmaṇa*: "O *brāhmaṇa*, many questions I have been asked by you, let me also now ask you only one question. (I think) you will answer it." "Yes, recluse, ask, I will answer." From the *Cittayamaka*¹ the *thera* asked this question:

"A unit of consciousness which functions, and has not yet disappeared, will that unit of consciousness disappear, will that unit not function? Or else, a unit of consciousness which will disappear, will not function, will that unit of consciousness function, will that unit not disappear?" The brahmin unable to make out its meaning asked: "What is this, recluse?" "Brāhmaṇa, it is the Buddha's *manta*." "Can you impart it to me?" "O *brāhmaṇa*, we can

¹ Comprised in the *Yamaka* (Section VIII) of the *Abhidhamma-piṭaka*—*Yamaka* (PTS), II, 1-21.



impart it to him who on receiving ordination wants to take it." Then the brāhmaṇa asked for ordination for the sake of the *manta* (sacred text or charm). The *thera* ordained him and admitted him into the Order. The *thera* then taught him the whole of the Buddha's saying, comprised in the three *Piṭakas*.

To this effect said the Ancients¹ :

1. "A brāhmaṇa youth was born in the neighbourhood of the terrace of the great Bo-tree, who was accomplished in the *vijjā*² and *sippa*, and versed in the three *Vedas*.

2. Possessed of great aptitude in attaining acquirements, indefatigable as a schismatic disputant, and himself a schismatic wanderer over Jambudīpa, he established himself in the character of a disputant.

3. He came to a certain *vihāra*, and was in the habit of rehearsing, by night and by day, with clasped hands, a discourse which he had learnt perfectly in all its component parts, and sustained throughout in the same lofty strain.

4. A certain great elder, Revata, becoming acquainted with him there, thought : "This individual is a person of profound knowledge ; it will be worthy (of me) to convert him."

¹ *Mahāvamsa* (Turnour Ed.), pp. 250-51. Verses 9-10 show a somewhat different reading in the text ; *Cālavamsa* (PTS), I, 37 Chap., vs. 215-46 ; Cf. Anderson's *Pali Reader*, pp. 113-14.

² It means knowledge, learning, scholarship, wisdom, etc. Some say that it includes three kinds of knowledge : *pubbenipāsa*, *cetopariya* and *āsavakkhaya* (The *Mahāvamsa-Addendum* by Mendis, p. 5).



5. He enquired : "Who is this who is braying like an ass?" (The brāhmaṇa) replied to him : "Thou canst define, then, the meaning conveyed in the bray of asses."

6. On (the therā) rejoining : "I can define it," (the brāhmaṇa) exhibited the extent of the knowledge he possessed. (The therā) answered each of his propositions and pointed out in what respect they were fallacious.

7. Being refuted, he said : "Well then, descend to thy own creed." And the therā explained to him a passage from the *Abhidhamma*. (The brāhmaṇa) could not divine the meaning of that (passage).

8. (The brāhmaṇa) enquired : "Whose *manta* is this?" (The therā) replied : "It is the Buddha's *manta*." On (the former's) exclaiming : "Impart it to me," (the latter replied :) "Take ordination."

9. He who had been refuted on the aforesaid grounds obtained ordination for the sake of the *manta*. The therā ordained him and taught him the *Kammaṭṭhānas* (grounds for contemplation).

10. Having been ordained he learned the three Piṭakas, and became as renowned as the sun or the moon.

11. As he was as profound in his eloquence (*ghosa*) as the Buddha himself, (they) conferred on

¹ Some have translated it as a sacred formula.



him the appellation of Buddhaghosa, (i.e., the voice of the Buddha); and throughout the world Ghosa became as renowned as the Buddha.

Thenceforward throughout the world this monk, known as the Thera Buddhaghosa, became renowned. Then in that *vihāra*, he composed an original work called the *Ñāṇodaya*. He also wrote a commentary on the *Dhammasaṅgaṇi*, called the *Atthasālinī*, and then he commenced to compile a *Parittatṭhakathā* (i.e., a general commentary on the three Pīṭakas). Then the venerable Thera Revata seeing this, said thus: "Friend Buddhaghosa, here in Jambudipa, the text alone of the three Pīṭakas has been preserved; the commentary thereon and the opinions of teachers (*ācariyavādā*) are not extant here. But the Sinhalese commentaries, composed in the Sinhalese language by Mahinda, who had previously consulted the account given by Sāriputta and others, and authenticated at the three councils, are extant in the island of Sīhala. Repairing thither, and examining the same, translate (them) into the dialect of Magadha. It will be an act conducive to the welfare of the whole world.

Having been thus advised, Buddhaghosa became glad and satisfied, and when he, paying homage to his preceptor and the Order of monks, had obtained their permission, he on his way reached Nāgapaṭṭana.¹ Then Sakka, king of the gods,

¹ It is identified with Negagapatam at the mouth of a lower tributary of the river Kāverī where Buddhaghosa embarked on board the ship carrying him across to Ceylon.



offered him a myrobalan fruit and a pen, and departed to his own abode. Then Buddhaghosa boarded a ship, and on his way he met the venerable Thera Buddhadatta on the great ocean and held conversation with him. Thereafter he reached Laṅkāpaṭṭana, in the reign of this king Mahānāma. When he had visited the Order of monks in the Mahāvihāra in Anurādhapura, and approached the Thera Saṃghapāla in the Mahāpadhāna Hall, he listened to the entire Sinhalese commentary and the Theravāda, and became convinced: "This conveys the true meaning of the doctrine of the Buddha; lord of *Dhamma*." And in that vihāra having assembled the Order, he petitioned thus: "Reverend members of the Order, I wish to translate the commentaries, give me access to all your books."

Then the Order of monks, for the purpose of testing his qualifications, gave only two stanzas, saying: "Having satisfied ourselves with thy qualifications, we will let thee have all our books." Then the venerable Buddhaghosa consulting the text of the three Piṭakas and the commentary thereon, compiled a book called the *Visuddhimagga*. Thereupon the gods in order to make the gift of his wisdom known among the multitude, rendered that book invisible. He recomposed a second copy, and this, too, did the gods make invisible. He recomposed for the third time. At that moment the gods restored the other two copies also. There were then three copies.

Thereupon the venerable Buddhaghosa taking the three copies, presented them to the Order of



monks. The order of monks then read out the three copies simultaneously. In those three copies, neither in composition nor in syllables, nor in words, nor in letters, nor in sense, nor in arrangement, nay, even in the Theravāda tradition and the like, and also in the text, was there the slightest variation.

To this effect said the Ancients¹ :

12. “Then having there (in Jambudīpa) compiled an original work called the *Ñāṇodaya*, he wrote the *Atthasālinī*, a commentary on the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*.

13. The wise then commenced to compile a *Parittatthakathā*, and the Thera Revata seeing it, said in these words :

14. “The text alone (of the three Pītakas) has been preserved in this land. The Atthakathās are not extant here; nor is there the Theravāda or any other version to be found.

15 & 16. The Sinhalese Atthakathās are genuine. They were composed in the Sinhalese language by the profoundly wise Mahinda with due regard to the methods of exposition as taught by the Buddha, put up before the three councils, and rehearsed by Sāriputta and others, and they are extant among the people of Simhala.

17. Repairing thither and listening to the same, translate (them) into the dialect of Magadha.

¹ *Mahāvamsa* (Turnour ed.), pp. 251-252.



It will be an act conducive to the welfare of the whole world."

18. Having been thus advised, this profoundly wise person rejoicing therein, departed from there and visited this island (of Laṅkā) in the reign of this king (Mahānāma).

19. On reaching the Mahāvihāra, the most splendid of all *viḥāras*, he entered the Mahāpadhāna Hall and approached Saṃghapāla.

20. He listened there to the Sinhalese *Aṭṭhakathās* and the Theravāda, all complete, and was convinced: "This conveys the true meaning of the doctrines of the Lord of *Dhamma*."

21. Having assembled the Order there, he petitioned: 'I wish to translate the *Aṭṭhakathās*; give me access to all your books.' For the purpose of testing his qualification,

22. the Order gave him only two *gāthās*, saying: 'Hence prove thy qualification; having satisfied ourselves on this point, we will then let thee have all our books.'

23. From these (two *gāthās*) he, consulting the three *Piṭakas* and the *Aṭṭhakathā* thereon and condensing them into an abridged form, composed a book called the *Visuddhimagga*.

24. Thereupon having assembled the Order who had acquired a thorough knowledge of the doctrine of the Buddha, at the Bo-tree, he commenced to read out (his composition).

25. The gods in order to make the gift of his wisdom celebrated among men, rendered that book



invisible. He, too, recomposed it for the third time.

26. When he was in the act of producing his book for the third time, for the purpose of expounding it, the gods restored the other two copies also.

27. The (assembled) monks then read out the three books simultaneously. Neither in sound, nor in significance, nor in arrangement,

28. nay even in the Theravāda and in the text was there, in the measure of verses, or in letters, the slightest variation in those three versions.¹

When the three copies of the book had been prepared, a great sound was heard, untimely thunders clapped, and the gods shouted applause in the air. At that time many thousand monks who had come together in the Mahāvihāra, saw that wonder, and being pleased and gladdened, they gave applause, and shouted again and again, saying: "Most assuredly this is Metteyya Bodhisatta." Then on hearing this, king Mahānāma, attended by a great royal party, came out of the city and went to the Mahāvihāra. Paying homage to the Order of monks, he invited the venerable *thera* (elder) Buddhaghosa after showing due honour to him: "Reverend Sir, please take thy meal in my palace until the preaching of the doctrine is finished." He consented silently.

¹ Cf. *Sāsanaśaṃsa* (PTS), p. 30.



Then the Order of monks gave him the books in which the text of the three *Piṭakas* was recorded together with the books of the Sinhalese commentaries. Then did the venerable Buddhaghosa take all those books, and while dwelling in a mansion called the Padhānaghara on the southern side of the Mahāvihāra, he translated all the Sinhalese commentaries, and rendered the commentaries on the three *Piṭakas* into the dialect of Magadha, which is the basic language.

In the *Samantapāsādikā*, three kinds of commentaries are spoken of. What are they? (They are): *Mahā-aṭṭhakathā*, *Mahā-paccarī-aṭṭhakathā*, and *Mahā-kuruṇḍa-aṭṭhakathā*. These three kinds of commentaries constitute the Sinhalese *Aṭṭhakathā*. The *Mahā-Aṭṭhakathā* was so called because having been made by the elders with Mahākassapa at their head, and authenticated in First Great Council, it was brought over and translated into the Sinhalese language by the great Mahinda. In the Sinhalese language, it is said, there was a raft (*paccarī*); hence sitting there the *Aṭṭhakathā*, which was compiled, came to be known as the great 'Raft' commentary (*Mahāpaccarī*). There was the *Kuruṇḍavelu-vihāra* (in Laṅkā); hence sitting there the *Aṭṭhakathā*, which was composed, came to be known as Kuruṇḍi commentary.

Then the venerable Buddhaghosa after having translated the Sinhalese *Kuruṇḍa-Aṭṭhakathā* into the dialect of Magadha which is the basic language, compiled a commentary on the *Vinaya-Piṭaka*, called the *Samantapāsādikā*.



As to this, it is said :

29. "Skilled in the *Vinaya*, he, for the growth of the *sāsana*, undertook the compilation of a commentary on the *Vinaya* in the dialect of Magadha.

30. And he completed all round his work called the *Samantapāsādikā*, extending up to twenty-seven thousand syllables."

Then in the *Sutta-Piṭaka*, after having translated the Sinhalese *Mahā-Atthakathā*, he compiled a commentary on the *Dīgha-Nikāya*, called the *Sumaṅgalavilāsinī*. So also he compiled a commentary on the *Majjhima-Nikāya*, called the *Papañcasūdanī*. Similarly he compiled a commentary on the *Samyutta-Nikāya*, called the *Sāratthappakāsinī*. Likewise, he compiled a commentary on the *Aṅguttara-Nikāya*, called the *Manorathapūraṇī*.

As to this, it is said :

31. "Skilled in the *Suttanta*, he for the growth of the *sāsana*, undertook the compilation of the commentaries on the *Suttanta*.

32. And he completed all round the commentaries on the four *Nikāyas*, extending up to eighty thousand syllables.

33. He also completed all round a commentary on the *Khuddaka-Nikāya*, extending up to thirty-seven thousand syllables."

Thereafter, in the *Abhidhamma-Piṭaka*, he, after having translated the Sinhalese *Mahāpaccarī-Atthakathā* into the dialect of Magadha, which is the basic language, compiled a commentary on the

Dhammasaṅgaṇi, called the *Atthasālinī*. So he compiled a commentary, called the *Sammohavinodanī*, on a book entitled the *Vibhaṅga*.

As to this it has been said :

34. "Skilled in the *Abhidhamma*, he, for the growth of the *sāsana*, undertook the compilation of the commentaries on the *Abhidhamma* in the dialect of Magadha.

35. He completed all round (these commentaries), called the *Atthasālinī* and the like, extending up to thirty thousand syllables."

And in the dialect of Magadha, he rendered the *Aṭṭhakathā* on the entire *Theravāda*, adopted in former times by the adherents of the *Theravāda*, the *Ācariyavāda*, and the like, with due regard to the method of the text. This compilation of the *Aṭṭhakathā* on the *Piṭakas* was an act conducive to the welfare of the inhabitants of all countries. When the *Aṭṭhakathā* on the *Piṭakas* was completed, the great earth quaked in many ways. The writing of this *Aṭṭhakathā* on the *Piṭakas* was completed in one year.

Then the venerable Buddhaghosa, having finished his task, wished to worship the great Bo-tree, and he, paying homage to the Order of monks and taking their permission, returned to Jambudīpa.

To this effect said the Ancients¹ :

36. "When nine hundred and fifty-six years had passed since the attainment of the *Parinibbāna*

¹ For verses 39-44, see *Mahāvamsa* (Turnour Ed.), pp. 252-53.



by the *Sambuddha*, Mahānāma, lord of men, reigned in Laṅka with ten kinds of piety.

37. As he was as profound in his eloquence as the Buddha himself, throughout the world Ghosa became as renowned as the Buddha. He came to the island of Laṅkā, and proved himself of its utmost benefit.

38. The Order gave (him) only two verses and the Sinhalese commentary, and he, with the permission of the Order, compiled the *Visuddhimagga*.

39. Then the Order, being exceedingly pleased and gladdened, shouted again and again, saying: 'Most assuredly this is *Metteya* (*Bodhisatta*).'

40. The Order gave (him) the books of the three *Pīṭakas* together with the commentary thereon. He took up his residence in the secluded Ganthākāra (*vihāra*).

41. The whole of the Sinhalese *Atthakathā* did he then translate into the dialect of Magadha, which is the root of all languages.

42. This proved an achievement of the utmost consequence to all languages spoken by the human race. All the *theras* (elders) and *ācariyas* (teachers) held this compilation in the same estimation as the text (of the canon).

43. Thereafter, his task having been finished, he returned to Jambudīpa to worship the great Bo-tree.

44. Mahānāma, having enjoyed the great earth twenty-two years, and doing many meritorious deeds, departed accordingly.



45. And the *thera*, having compiled the *Aṭṭhakathā* on the *Piṭakas* and doing immense good to the world, lived his allotted span of life and was reborn in the Tusita heaven.

46. The elder monks, dwellers of Laṅkā, who had their task done, and were free from sins, then lived their allotted span of life and all of them also entered into *Nibbāna*."

47. Thus knowing that life is transient and hard to win, be wise and exert yourself to attain the everlasting and immortal state.

Here ends the Chapter, called 'The Account of the Translation of the *Aṭṭhakathā* of the Three *Piṭakas*' in the *Saddhammasamgaha*, compiled for the serene joy and emotion of the pious.



CHAPTER VIII

The Account of the Tikās of the Three Piṭakas

Thereafter when six hundred and eighty-three years had passed since the translation of the commentaries on the three *Piṭakas*, a great king named Parakkamabāhu,¹ following the line of Mahāsammata, was born in the Solar-race. After his father's death when he had defeated the hostile kings of three kingdoms, he was consecrated as a universal monarch of the whole of Laṅkā and he, as a paramount sovereign shining forth with his glory that spread throughout his country and elsewhere, reigned righteously in the great city of Pulatthī. When he had found that the *sāsana*, divided into different sects, having been decayed after one thousand one hundred and fifty-four years from the time of the great king Vaṭṭagāmanī-abhaya, the Kulaputtas (lit. the sons of good families) belonging to the *sāsana* (religion) had shared loss, he, with his heart moved with compassion, thought: "How shall I make the *sāsana* prosper?" After having completely subdued many hundred wicked monks, robed them in white garment, turned them out of the Order and purified the *sāsana*. Under the leadership of thera Mahākassapa King Parakkamabāhu built great

¹ B. C. Law, *The Life of King Parakkamabāhu*, I. *Ceylon Historical Journal*, Vol. IV. Nos. 1-4, pp. 23 ff.



vihāras (monasteries) together with the *cetiya*s (shrines) at Jetavana, Pubbārāma, Dakkhiṇārāma, Uttarārāma, Veluvana, Kapilavatthu, Isipatana, Kusinārārāma, and Laṅkātilaka. He also caused an Uposatha Hall to be erected, which was a great mansion with eleven stories and one thousand compartments, decorated with a tower, and rich in paintings and creeperworks. Then he built a great *vihāra* named Jetavana, adorned with rows of Bo-trees, *stūpas*, cells, huts and halls, filled with fragrance of flowers of various kinds of best trees, frequented by birds, such as the *kokilas* (cuckoos) and the rest and provided them with tanks full of cold water and covered with *paduma*, *uppala*, and *puṇḍarika* varieties of lotus.

The venerable therā Mahākassapa, who was the senior of the Order of many thousand monks, assembled the order of monks there. Then the venerable therā Mahākassapa addressed the monks : "Friends, the whole of the *Atthavaṇṇanā*, compiled by the ancients for the purpose of explaining the hidden meaning of the *Aṭṭhakathā* of the three *Piṭakas*, does not serve the purpose of monks residing in different countries. Some are written in many terse expressions according to the grammar of the Sinhalese language, some are written in the dialect of Magadha, which is the basic language, but they have been confused and twisted by translation. We should, removing the drawback in the translation, compile a complete and clear *Atthavaṇṇanā*." The monks replied :



“Reverend Sir, let the *thera* get the king issue an order therefor.”

At that time the king with his following came out of the city and went to the *Vihāra*. Paying homage to the Order of monks headed by the *thera* Mahākassapa, he took his seat on one side.

Then the *thera* (elder) said to him : “ O great king, should the compilation of the *Atthavaṇṇanā* of the *Aṭṭhakathās* of the *Piṭakas* be thy duty.” “It is well, reverend Sir, I will lend my bodily co-operation : let the Order of monks be confident.” Thereafter the king, paying homage to the Order of monks entered the city.

Then the elder monks, having finished their meal, assembled in the mansion, built by king Parakkamabāhu, and beginning with an *Atthavaṇṇanā* of the *Samantapāsādikā*, an *Aṭṭhakathā* (commentary) on the *Vinaya-Piṭaka*, compiled an *Atthavaṇṇanā*, called the *Sāratthadīpanī*, in the dialect of Magadha which is the basic language.

As to this has it been said :

1. “ For proficiency in the *Vinaya* and for the growth of the *sāsana*, they understood the compilation of a *Vaṇṇanā* of the *Aṭṭhakathā* on the *Vinaya*.

2. They completed all round a work called the *Sāratthadīpanī*, extending up to thirty thousand syllables.”

Thereafter beginning with an *Atthavaṇṇanā* of the *Sumaṅgalavilāsinī*, an *Aṭṭhakathā* on the *Dīgha Nikāya* in the *Suttanta-Piṭaka*, they compiled an *Atthavaṇṇanā*, called the first *Sārattha-*



mañjusā, in the dialect of Magadha, which is the basic language. Similarly, beginning with an *Atthavaṇṇanā* of the *Papañcasūdanī*, an *Aṭṭhakathā* on the *Majjhima Nikāya*, they compiled an *Atthavaṇṇanā*, called the second *Sāratthamañjusā*, in the dialect of Magadha, which is the basic language. So also, beginning with an *Atthavaṇṇanā* of the *Sāratthappakāsinī*, an *Aṭṭhakathā* on the *Samyutta-Nikāya*, they compiled an *Atthavaṇṇanā*, called the third *Sāratthamañjusā* in the dialect of Magadha, which is the basic language. So also, beginning with an *Atthavaṇṇanā* of the *Monorathapūraṇīttthappakāsinī*, an *Aṭṭhakathā* on the *Aṅguttara-Nikāya*, they compiled an *Atthavaṇṇanā*, called the fourth *Sāratthamañjusā* in the dialect of Magadha, which is the basic language.

As to this it is said :

3. "Skilled in the *Suttanta*, they for the growth of the *sāsana*, undertook the compilation of a *Vaṇṇanā* of the *Aṭṭhakathā* on the *Suttanta*.

4. They completed all round a work called the *Sāratthamañjusā*, extending up to ninety-four thousand syllables."

Thereafter beginning with an *Atthavaṇṇanā* of the *Atthasālinī*, an *Aṭṭhakathā* on the *Dhammasaṅgaṇi* in the *Abhidhammapiṭaka*, they compiled an original *Ṭīkā* and a *sub-Ṭīkā*, called the first *Paramatthappakāsinī*, in the dialect of Magadha, which is the basic language. Similarly, beginning with an *Atthavaṇṇanā* of the *Sammoha-vinodanī*, an *Aṭṭhakathā* on the book called *Vibhaṅga*, they



compiled an original *Ṭikā* and a *sub-Ṭikā*, called the second *Paramatthappakāsinī*, in the dialect of Magadha, which is the basic language. Likewise, beginning with an *Atthavaṇṇanā* of the *Paramatthadīpanī*, an *Aṭṭhakathā* on the five books (of the *Abhidhamma*), they compiled an original *Ṭikā* and a *sub-Ṭikā* called the third *Paramatthappakāsinī*, in the dialect of Magadha, which is the basic language.

To this effect said the Ancients :

5. " Skilled in the *Abhidhamma*, they, for the growth of the *sāsana*, undertook the compilation of a *Vaṇṇanā* of the *Aṭṭhakathā* on the *Abhidhamma*.

6. They completed all round the *Paramatthapakāsinī* extending up to twenty-seven thousand syllables."

Thus being requested by king *Parakkama-bāhu*, the *thera* *Mahākassapa* together with many thousand *theras* put forth their exertion and even at the rehearsal of the *Dhamma* and the *Vinaya*, completed the *Atthavaṇṇanā* of the *Aṭṭhakathā* on the *Piṭakas*. When the compilation of the *Atthavaṇṇanā* was completed, many wonders, including the earthquake and the like, were manifested, and the gods shouted applause. This compilation of the *Atthavaṇṇanā* of the *Aṭṭhakathā* on the *Piṭakas* was completed in one year.

To this effect said the Ancients :

7. "One thousand five hundred and eighty-seven years after the attainment of the *Pari-*



nibbāna by the *Sambuddha*, Parakkama became king.

8. He, who was consecrated and fond of the lustre of the *sāsana*, suppressed his enemies by the power of his great merit.

9. For this purpose Parakkamabāhu, king of Simphala, made the *Nikāyas* harmonious and the *sāsana* pure.

10 & 11. Being requested by king Parakkamabāhu who wished that the *sāsana* might endure, the great *thera* Kassapa, leader of the Order, exerted for the *sāsana* so that the *sāsana* might prosper in the island of Tambapaṇṇi.¹

12. The explanation of hidden meaning of the *Aṭṭhakathā* on the *Piṭakas* does not serve altogether the purpose of monks everywhere.

13. Some are written in many terse expressions according to the Sinhalese grammar which by its nature is difficult to be understood.

14. Some, having made an attempt in the language of Magadha, have written something intermixed with translation.

15. Here, in many places is found the worthlessness in composition; things are not clearly described and they are not intelligible without difficulty in meaning.

¹ It may be correctly identified with Ceylon which was meant in ancient times as Pārasamudra (Gk. Palacesimunda) *Indian Antiquary* 1919, pp. 195-196; for a detailed treatment vide Law, *Geography of Early Buddhism*, pp. 70-71.



16. From what is thus incomplete, how can the inhabitants of different countries make out the meaning throughout.

17. From this, leaving aside the translation and taking the substance throughout, I shall make a clear and full exposition.

18 & 19. The works called the *Sāratthadīpanī*, the *Sāratthamañjusā*, and the *Paramatthappakāsinī*, were expounded by the great elders as *Vañṇanā* of the three *Pīṭakas* and as explanation of their hidden meanings. This act was conducive to the welfare of beings and of all languages.

20. The king of *Laṅkā*, named *Parakkama-bhuja*, who was pious and wise, reigned in *Laṅkā* with ten kinds of piety.

21. He who was a believer in the Three Jewels, doing many meritorious deeds, departed accordingly at the end of his life.

22. When the elders, such as *Kassapa* and others, had compiled the *Ṭikā* of the *Pīṭakas*, they also lived their allotted span of life and departed according to their deeds.

23. Thus knowing that life is transient and hard to win, be wise and exert yourselves to attain the everlasting and immortal state.

Here ends the Chapter, called 'The Account of the *Ṭikās* (commentaries) of the Three *Pīṭakas*' in the *Saddhammasaṃgaha*, compiled for the serene joy and emotion of the pious.



CHAPTER IX

THE ACCOUNT OF ALL THE BOOKS COMPILED BY THE THERAS (ELDERS)

1. The text of the three *Piṭakas* delivered by the Perfectly Enlightened One, contains one thousand one hundred and eighty-three chapters.

2. And according to the number of syllables, the text of the three *Piṭakas* contains two lac two *nahuta* five thousand seven hundred and fifty syllables in number.

3. And according to letters, the text of the three *Piṭakas* contains ninety-four lac and sixty-four thousand letters.

4. The entire *Aṭṭhakathā* of the *Piṭakas*, which was expounded by Buddhaghosa, contains one thousand one hundred and sixty-three chapters.

5. And according to the number of syllables, the whole *Aṭṭhakathā* of the *Piṭakas* contains two lac nine *nahuta* five thousand seven hundred and fifty syllables.

6. And according to letters, the whole of *Aṭṭhakathā* of the *Piṭakas* contains ninety-three lac and four thousand letters.

7. The *Ṭīkā* (commentary) of the three *Piṭakas*, which was expounded by the teachers of the *Ṭīkā*, contains, according to the number of chapters, six hundred and thirty-two chapters.



8. And according to syllables, the *Ṭīkā* of the three *Piṭakas* contains one hundred and fifty-eight thousand syllables.

9. And according to letters, the *Ṭīkā* of the three *Piṭakas* contains fifty hundred and fifty-six thousand letters.

10. The grand work, known as the *Visuddhimagga*, was compiled by the *thera* Buddhaghosa as an explanation of the meaning of the *Piṭakas*.

11. The *Kaṅkhā-vitaranī*, an *Aṭṭhakathā* on the *Pātimokkha*, was also compiled by the wise *thera* Buddhaghosa.

12. The *Khuddasikkhā*, with thorough mastery, was compiled by the *thera* Dhammasiri, who was morally strong, for the use of monks who were beginners.

13. The excellent work, compiled by the *thera* Buddhaddatta, is widely known as the *Abhidhammāvatāra*.

14. The *Pramattha-vinicchaya* was compiled by the *thera* Aniruddha in the excellent city of Kāñcīpura.

15. The *Abhidhammattha-saṃgaha*¹ was compiled by a *thera*, named Anuruddha, for the purpose of explaining the Highest Truth.

16. The *Saccasamkhepa*, adorned with varied method, was compiled by a disciple of the *thera* Ānanda as an exposition of subtle matters.

¹ *Compendium of Philosophy* by S. Z. Aung & Mrs. Rhys Davids. 1910.



17. A work, called the Treatise of Khema, was compiled by a wise *thera* named Khema, in edification of the Highest Truth.

18. Kaccāyana, devoted to contemplation, compiled a work called *Samghanandi*; Vimalabodhi and Brahmaputta were the authors of its *Ṭīkā*.

19. A work called the *Kūpasiddhi* was compiled by the wise *thera* Buddhappiya, who wished that the True Doctrine might endure.

20. The *Abhidhānappadīpikā* was compiled by the wise *thera* Moggallāna, who wished that the True Doctrine might endure.

21. The masterly *Jinālaṅkāra* was compiled by a *thera* named Buddharakkhita, who was adorned with the qualities of the Master.

22. The delightful work *Jinacarita* was compiled by the strong-minded *thera* called Medhaṅkara.¹

23. A good *Ṭīkā* on the *Visuddhimagga*, which is known as the *Paramatthamañjūsā*, was compiled by the wise *thera* Dhammapāla.

24. The book called the *Vinayasamṅgaha* was compiled by a *thera* named Sagaramati, revealing the meaning of the Vinaya.

25. A good *vaṇṇanā* of the *Saccasamkhepa*, which is known as the *Nissayatthakathā*, was compiled by a *thera* named Mahābodhi.

¹ He lived in the reign of Bhuvaneka Bāhu I (1277-88 A.D.). His full name was Vanaratana Medhamkara (vide *Gandhacamsa*, JPTS, 1886, pp. 62, 72).



26. A good *vaṇṇanā* (description) of the *Paramatthavinicchaya*, which is known as the *Mukhamattakā*, was compiled by a *thera* named Mahābodhi.

27. The good *Paramatthadīpanī*, a *vaṇṇanā* of the *Vimāna* and the *Petavatthu*, was compiled by the *thera* Dhammapāla.

28 & 29. The *Sobodhālaṃkāra*, the clear *Vuttodaya* and a *Ṭīkā* on the *Khuddasikkhā* having been compiled, the *Sambuddha-vaṇṇanā* was compiled by a *thera* named Saṃgharakkhita, who wished that the True Doctrine might endure and the *sāsana* might prosper.

30. The good *Vinayavinicchaya* was compiled by the *thera* Buddhasīha for the growth of the religion.

31. A good and well-written *Ṭīkā* on the *Kaṅkhā-vitaranī* was compiled by a strong-minded *thera* named Buddhanāga.

32. The beautiful *Paramatthadīpanī*, an *Aṭṭhakathā* on the *Therīgāthā*, was compiled by the *thera* Dhammapāla.

33. A good *Ṭīkā* on the *Abhidhammattha-saṃgaha* was compiled by a wise *thera* who was a disciple of the *thera* Sāriputta.

34. And the *Dhammapada Aṭṭhakathā*, with clever references was compiled by (one) *thera* Buddhaghosa.

35. The excellent work, known as the *Nettipakaraṇa*, was compiled by the *thera* Kaccāyana at the instance of the Enlightened One.



36. A good *vaṇṇanā* of the *Saccasaṃkhepa*, known as the *Sāratthasālinī*, was compiled by an elder who was a disciple of *Sāriputta*.

37. Many small and beautiful works were compiled by that elder's disciple who was fond of the lustre of the religion.

38. For the growth of the religion of the Conqueror, all these works were compiled by the elders in adaptation of the three *Piṭakas*.

39. All (these) elders of great might, doing much good to the world, lived their allotted span of life and then departed according to their deeds.

40. Thus knowing that life is transient and hard to win, be wise and exert yourself to attain the everlasting and immortal state.

Here ends the chapter, called 'The Account of all the Books compiled by the Theras' in the *Saddhamma-saṃgaha*, compiled for the serene joy and emotion of the pious.



CHAPTER X

The Account of the Advantages of Writing the Three Piṭakas.

Thereafter an account of the advantages of copying the three *Piṭakas* should be related. Moreover, the Exalted One lying on the bed of his *Parinibbāna*, addressed the *thera* Ānanda, and said :

“ Ānanda, the Doctrine and the Discipline which I have set forth and laid down for you all, let them, after I am gone, be the Teacher unto you.”¹ “ There are eighty-four thousand units of text propounded by me during forty-five years from the time of my Enlightenment up to the attainment of the *Parinibbāna*. I am to go alone, now I alone instruct and admonish you, but, after I am gone, these eighty-four thousand units of text, like eighty-four thousand Buddhas, will instruct and admonish you.”

Thus he formulated eighty-four thousand excellent units of *Dhamma*, called his own body of Norm, which by themselves had taken the place of the Teacher, as eighty-four thousand excellent self-born Buddhas.

¹ See *Mahāparinibbāna-Sutta* (Ch. VI) of the *Digha Nikāya*, Vol. II. *Yo vo Ānanda mayā Dhammo ca Vinayo ca desito paññatto, so vo mam'accayena satthā.*



This has been said by the Exalted One :

1. Each letter (in the *Piṭakas*) should be considered as equal to a Buddha-representation. Therefore, a wise man should write down the three *Piṭakas*.

2. If the three *Piṭakas* last, the *Sambuddhas* to the extent of eighty-four thousand will also last.

3. Each letter in the Buddha's teaching (contained) in the scriptures should be considered as having merit equal to a Buddha-representation.

4. Therefore, a wise man, who wishes for the three-fold wealth, should write down, or cause it to be written down in a book, or in a memorial in honour of the *Dhamma*.

5. He who writes down the *Dhamma*, known as the three *Piṭakas*, fulfils the ten items of meritorious deeds and the threefold right conduct.

6. He also fulfils thoroughly the Good Norm in three ways, namely, in knowledge, in practice, and in realisation of the teaching.

7. Each letter in the teaching of the Lord of the world should be considered as having merit equal to a Buddha-representation.

8. Therefore, a wise man who wishes for the threefold wealth, should write down a letter of the three *Piṭakas*, or cause it to be written down.

9. All the three *Piṭakas* comprise four hundred crore and seventy-two letters.

10. Those, who write down the *Piṭakas*, do like the making of four hundred crore and seventy-two images (of the Buddha).

The advantage of writing the three *Piṭakas* should be related by quoting here the advantage of making an image which, in praise of an image in Kosala, the Exalted One declared in detail :

11. "Those, who write down a letter of the three *Piṭakas* like the making of an image of the Teacher, are reborn in all the worlds with charming bodies and with radiance as the sun.

12. Those who cause a letter of the *Piṭaka* to be written down, do not undergo their existence either as women or as eunuchs, and the like, having the characteristics of both sexes, but they are born perfect throughout.

13. Those who cause a letter of the *Piṭaka* to be written down, do not even suffer death by accident, or by a poisonous weapon, or by the *mantras*, and the like, or by the enemy kings, (for) they are led by kindness.

14. Those who cause a letter of the *Piṭaka* to be written down, are reborn with the most excellent beauty either in a noble Brāhmaṇa family, or in a famous Khattiya family, but they are not born in an inferior or a low family.

15. Those who cause a letter of the *Piṭaka* to be written down, do not undergo their existence as *petas* (spirits) in the world hereafter, nor are they born dumb, paralysed, blind or deaf. They are set free from the four purgatories.

16. Those who cause a letter of the *Piṭaka* to be written down, do not suffer in the womb, or even at the time of their birth. Even the mothers who give birth to them, do not suffer.



17. Those who cause a letter of the *Piṭaka* to be written down, prosper always in happiness, wealth, enjoyment, fame and the rest; even in all respects, they grow.

18. Those who cause a letter of the *Piṭaka* to be written down, are not besmeared with dirt, phlegm, and the like, when they are born in the womb, but they remain pure like precious stones on a clean garment.

19. Those who cause a letter of the *Piṭaka* to be written down, grow even happily in the womb, and when they come out of their mothers' wombs, they descend even as from the preacher's chair.

20. Those who cause a letter of the *Piṭaka* to be written down are honoured, like the thousand-eyed (*Sakka*), with ambrosia (by the gods). Likewise, they, honoured by the chief kings, became the excellent and sovereign kings.

21. Those men who cause a letter of the *Dhamma* to be written down, if they, after having given up their existence as men, come back to life as gods, obtain the excellent and beautiful celestial abodes.

22. Those who write down a letter of the three *Piṭakas*, rejoice exceedingly (always) and everywhere, (entertained) by the excellent heavenly music of the lovely women, and they feel the highest happiness for a long time.

23. Those who cause a letter of the *Piṭaka* to be written down, reach the highest state in the highest deva-world, if they so desire, when they,



at the completion of their existence, fall away therefrom.

24. Having obtained the *Sambuddhahood* which, in the three existences, is the only essential object, the Enlightenment by oneself, and the state of a disciple of great might, they gain the highest bliss of *nibbāna* (perfect beatitude).

25. The givers of book-band, clothing, bowl, pen-holder, 'thread for sewing', or soot, become possessed of the highest wisdom.

26. Those who themselves write, those who make others to write, and those who approve of it, will in future be the wise disciples of Metteyya, the Conqueror.

27. Whatever is wished for, prayed for, or delighted in, those who write or pay others (for writing), will gain all at ease in future."¹

Here ends the Chapter, called the 'Account of the Advantages of Writing the Three *Pitakas*' in the *Saddhammasamgaha*, compiled for the serene joy and emotion of the pious.

¹ The source cannot be traced.



CHAPTER XI

The Account of the Advantages of Hearing the Preaching of the Norm

Thereafter an account of the advantages of hearing the (preaching of the) 'True Doctrine' is to be presented.

This has been said by the Exalted One :

1. " He who sees the Norm, preached by me, Vakkali, it is he who sees me. For not seeing the Norm, one cannot see me, although he sees me."

The knowledge of the Norm has been placed by the Exalted One himself exactly in the same position as his own. This Norm, however, has been honoured, esteemed, revered and respected by all the Buddhas—past, present and future. He who honours, esteems, reveres and respects the 'Good Norm', it is he who honours, esteems, reveres, and respects the Exalted One. This has also been said by the Exalted One :

2 & 3. " For the destruction of grief of the many, those who were the *Sambuddhas* in the past, those who are the *Sambuddhas* at present, and those who will be the *Buddhas* in the future, they all, paying esteem to the Norm, lived, live and will live respectively. This is the law of the *Buddhas*.

4. Therefore, a lover of oneself wishing for greatness, should esteem the Norm, remembering the teaching of the *Buddhas*.



5. The *Sambuddhas* have a twofold body, one the glorious visible body and the other called the body of Norm, the Norm preached by them.

6. Abiding therein by their supernormal powers and knowing fully the syllables, words, name and sense of (the Norm), they obtained the Bodhi-seed.

7. There having been many merits in the Good Norm, a wise person who seeks his welfare should have a peaceful mind and due respect for the Norm.

8. Leaving aside your own work, you have come here to hear (the preaching) of the Norm. Therefore the Norm, preached by the *Sambuddha*, should be respectfully heard."

Once upon a time, the Exalted One dwelt near Sāvattthī. At that time, in an assembly hall, the venerable Nandaka instructed, roused, incited and delighted the monks on a doctrinal topic in polite speech, distinct, clearly enunciated, and instructive. And those monks were hearing attentively the preaching of the Norm in good thought, fixing their mind, pondering and reflecting on it. Now, when the Teacher had finished his preaching of the sermon to a great crowd, taken his meal and comforted his body for a while, he bathed well with water prepared by his attendants, and being properly dressed and covered, went to the door of the assembly hall for the purpose of hearing the preaching of the Norm by the venerable Nandaka and there he, taking hold of



the loose pulling rope (of the door) and hearing the preaching of the Norm, remained standing till third watch of the night, and as soon as the preaching was finished he shouted applause, saying: "Nandaka, the disquisition on the Norm, has been well delivered." And as soon as the Teacher shouted applause, the earthly *Nāgas*, *Supannas*, and *Yakkhas* as well as the earthly gods shouted applause even in one voice reaching up to the Brahma-world. On hearing this the elder understood: 'This is the sound of the Teacher's applause.' And instantly he descended in haste from the preacher's seat, and came out. And placing his head on the feet of Him having the Ten Powers, and paying homage to the Exalted One, he said: "Reverend Sir, Exalted One, when did you come here?" "I came here, Nandaka, when you had just begun (the preaching of) the Suttanta."

The elder got frightened, and said: "Reverend Sir, Buddha, what you did was indeed hard, you are delicate. That 'I should know the very Tathāgata' even such a thought, therefore, did not occur to me." "Nandaka, even when I was fulfilling the Perfectionary virtues for a long period of more than one hundred thousand *kappas* (cycles) and four *asaṅkheyyas* (immeasurable, countless) for the purpose of mastering this good Norm, and when I was fulfilling these virtues in the life of Vidhura, Mahāgovinda, Kuddāloka, Aruka, Jotipāla, Bodhi the mendicant, Mahosadha the wise, and the like, preaching this Norm to



others, and was reaching the Perfection of Wisdom, there was no limit of my fulfilling those virtues. At that time, whenever I preached the Norm to others or heard others preach it, I had no satisfaction." To explain this, he said :

9. " In immeasurable time, when I was going through different existences, I had no satisfaction, whenever I preached or heard the Norm.

10. Why is it, then, that although at the present time I become a *Sambuddha*, who is omniscient and an abode of compassion, I have no satisfaction whenever I preach the Norm to the world.

11. Because of my resolve : ' Being the Enlightened One, I will enlighten (others).' I am born as a *Sambuddha*. Verily, let me enlighten the beings.

12. Because of my resolve : ' Having crossed, I will help (others) to cross over.' I have overcome suffering. Verily, let me help the beings to overcome.

13. Because of my resolve : ' Being free I will help (others) to be free.' I am free from suffering. Verily, let me help the beings to be free.'

14. This Norm has been expounded by the great *Sambuddhas* : ' With one's heart inclined towards the Norm, the best Norm should be heard.'

So precious is this Norm. " In this world of living beings, Nandaka, should you be able to preach (the doctrine) for a *kappa* (cycle), I would also live and hear it for not less than a *kappa*,"



said the Exalted One. The venerable Nandaka, hearing it, said: "Wonderful it is, Reverend Sir, it is marvellous, Reverend Sir, that the Tathāgata who has himself known all things to be known, who has found out the Path which was not found out, who has known the Path which was not known, who has explained the Path which was not explained, who knows the Path, who is skilled in the Path, thus did not find even satisfaction or exhaustion whenever he himself preached this good Norm or heard others preach it." Knowing thus, this good Norm should be respectfully heard. This preaching (of the Norm) to Nandaka is the first.

The good Norm should respectfully be heard in this world by all those respectable persons who come from different seats (positions) and sit down together and assemble in the preaching hall. Here a preacher of the Norm thinks: "The people will know, this is a preacher of the Norm," and thus moving in his desire for gain and honour, he preaches the Norm. This does not bear much reward. Some in expectation of their own experiences, preach the Norm to others. This bears much reward, this constitutes an item contributing to the meritorious action of preaching (of the Norm). Some one as he listens there, thinks: "The people will thus know me to be faithful," and thus moving in his desire for gain and honour, he hears the preaching (of the Norm). This does not bear much reward. Some one again thinks: "This hearing (of the preaching) of the



Norm will be to my great advantage," and he, wishing for his own welfare, hears (the preaching of) the Norm with a very tender heart inclined towards hearing (of the preaching) of the Norm. This constitutes an item contributing to the meritorious action of hearing (the preaching of the Norm). In this connection, in order to show the advantage of hearing respectfully and of giving one's approval at the time of hearing (the preaching) of the Norm, this is the story :

At Sāvattthī, it is said, the husband of a daughter of a certain wealthy man hearing the preaching of the Norm of the Teacher, thought : " It is not possible for me, as a householder, to fulfil this Norm. I will renounce the world." He went to a monastery and was ordained before a certain monk who lived on alms-food. When Pasenadi of Kosala had known : ' This (lady) is without her husband,' he caused her to be brought into his harem. Then one day a person, taking a bunch of blue lotuses, entered the harem on some business, and presented them to the king. Now the king taking the bunch of blue lotuses, distributed one to each of those women. The flowers having been distributed, that lady, stretching-forth her both hands, showed herself cheerful, but when she had scented, she cried out. The king noticing both of her actions, sent for her and asked (the reasons). In course of relating the reasons for her becoming cheerful and having a cry, she said :



15. "Here permeates a scent from the mouth of my husband, who is a *thera* (elder). When I remember him as the lotus, I cry out, O lord of charioteers.

16. His breathing (in and out), full of pleasant smell, blows out. Early he did meritorious deeds, O king. As I had remembered it, I cried out."

Although this was said even for the third time, the king could not believe. Next day, when he caused all garlands, toilet perfumes, and other scented objects to be removed from the entire palace, and had seats prepared for the Order of monks headed by the Buddha, he invited the Order of monks headed by the Buddha. When they were seated on those seats, he gave them a great gift.

And when they had finished taking their meals, he asked that lady: "Which *thera*?" "This *thera*, lord," Then the king, paying homage to the Teacher, said: "Reverend Sir, let the Order of monks go along with you, let such and such *thera* make the act of approval." Then the Teacher, leaving that monk, went to the monastery. Thereafter as soon as the *thera* began the act of approval, the entire palace was filled as if with the perfumes of scent, camphor, sandal, and the residue of sesamum oil. The king thought: "This lady speaks truly," and became glad. Next day, he asked the Teacher about its reason. Then the Exalted One explained: "O great king, formerly when this man was hearing the preaching of the Norm, his body was touched by the fivefold



joy and his hairs stood erect. When his body was filled with that joy, a sound : “ It is well,” “ It is well ! ” came out of his mouth, and while shouting applause, he heard (the preaching of) the Norm. For that reason, O great king, he acquired this merit.”

As it has been said :

17. “ At the time of preaching the good Norm he who says : ‘ It is well, It is well,’ good smell spreads from his mouth, as does from the lotus in the water.

18. Uttered pleasantly were the utterances of the *Sambuddhas*. He who praises highly this pleasant Norm, becomes a wise man, full of sweet voice, having his mouth well perfumed and uttering a sweet cry.

Because one sees this merit of hearing respectfully (the preaching of the Norm), he should hear (the preaching of) the good Norm with due respect. (This account of) shouting applause is the second.

19. Let those of you who have come here and taken seats together for the purpose of hearing (the preaching of) the good Norm, hear that Norm with a peaceful heart.”

Once upon a time the Teacher, the Exalted One, was residing at Sāvattthī in the Jetavana with his excellent Order. At that time the Buddha, honoured by *Brāhmaṇas* and gods, delivered this discourse :

“ Gifts, O brethren, are of two kinds. Which are the two? Material gifts and spiritual gifts. These, monks, are the two kinds of gifts. Of



these two, brethren, this is the best, namely, spiritual gifts.'"¹

This Norm means mindfulness and right exertion. This Norm is called the basis of *Iddhi* or miraculous power, the controlling faculties, the constituents of higher knowledge, the eight-fold Path, insight into the Aryan Truth, a lamp for the highest reward in *Nibbāna*. But in this world, whosoever wishing for merit, speaks consistently of any one of the nine classes of the texts, the *Sutta*, the *Geyya*, and the rest, he, being indifferent to his gain and even respecting the good Norm, teaches either the *Sutta* or the *Vedalla*. This gift of the doctrine is called the best gift. Should any one offer fine and costly robes, in a sufficient number, resembling the spathes of plantain trees to the *Buddhas*, the *Paccekabuddhas* and to those who are free from sins, who are always seated cross-legged in the interior of the *Cakkavāla* sphere extending up to the Brahma-world, even an approval in a *gāthā* of four half-lines for the purpose of approving of the gift in that congregation, is superior (to such gift). Why? (Because) this gift is not worth an infinitesimal portion of that *gāthā*. In preaching the Norm thus, he spoke of its merit. Or, again, as to the great merit: a person who makes (others) hear (the preaching of) the Norm, is said to acquire a great merit. Again, even a gift of the doctrine given there, in that congregation, in a

¹ *Anguttara-Nikāya*, Vol. II, p. 18.



gāthā (stanza) of four half-lines, by way of approval, is superior to a gift of excellent food prepared from the best kind of grains with meat and with various kinds of soup and curry, and offered after filling the bowls with it to such a company; or even to a gift of medicine, complete with ghee, fresh butter, oil, honey, sugar, molasses, and the like; or even to a gift of seats and beds offered after constructing many hundred thousand *vihāras* like the *Mahāvihāra* and mansions like the *Lohapāsāda*; or to a gift made at a cost of fifty-four *koṭis* (crores), even as did the householder Anāthapiṇḍika buy a land for the price of (lit. by spreading out) eighty *koṭis* for the purpose of constructing the *Jetavana vihāra*, build a mansion at a cost of eighty *koṭis*, and honour the *vihāra* spending eighty *koṭis*, or, likewise, to a gift of twenty-seven *koṭis* even as did the great female lay-devotee *Visākhā*, in the construction of a mansion in *Pubbārāma*, buy a land for the price of nine *koṭis*, build the mansion at a cost of nine *koṭis*, and honour the *vihāra* spending nine *koṭis*. Why? Those rich *Khattiyas* and *Brāhmaṇas* who perform such meritorious actions, do these after hearing (the preaching of) the Norm and not without hearing it. Had not these beings heard (the preaching of) the Norm, they would not have given even a spoonful of ricegruel or even a ladleful of rice. It is for this reason that only the gift of the doctrine is the best of all gifts.

Moreover, excepting the *Buddhas*, and the *Paccekabuddhas*, others like *Sāriputta* and the



rest, who possessed the knowledge by which they could count even drops of water, if the rains were to set in for an entire cycle, were unable to attain the Path of a Stream-Winner,¹ the fruit thereof and the rest by their own capacity to the Norm. The *thera* Assaji and others realised the Fruit of a Stream-Winner, after hearing the Norm preached; they realized the knowledge of the perfectionary virtues of a disciple by the Teacher's preaching of the Norm. Even the *thera* Sāriputta, when he had heard the Exalted One preach the Norm, acquired the sixteen kinds of knowledge along with the Path to Arahantship.² He had intelligence in hearing; he had abundant, developed, great, wide, deep, complete, extensive, full, rapid, easy-going, quick, alert, sharp, penetrating wisdom, he was endowed with the knowledge of perfectionary virtues of a disciple. It is for this reason that only the gift of the doctrine is deemed to be the best, chief, excellent, and first of all gifts.

Even imagining of this gift, when Sakka, king of gods, being at the head of gods of ten thousand *Cakkavālas*, had approached the Teacher and paid homage to the Exalted One, he asked: "Reverend Sir, among the gifts, which is the best; among tastes, which is the best; among delights which is the best; on what grounds the destruction of desire is the foremost?" Then the

¹ One who has attained the first stage of sanctification (*sotāpatti*) cf. *Vinaya*, II, 93; *Samyutta*, V, 357; *Puggalapaññatti*, p. 17 etc.

² The highest stage of sanctification.



Teacher, in giving answer to his four questions, uttered this verse :

20. " A gift of the doctrine excels all gifts, the taste of *Dhamma* excels all tastes, the delight in *Dhamma* excels all delights, the destruction of desire surpasses all sufferings."

When the teacher had thus spoken the answer of the four questions in this verse, eighty-four thousand gods realised the Norm. When Sakka (the chief of the gods) had heard the Teacher's discourse on the Norm, he paid homage to the Teacher and said :

" Reverend Sir, why do you not grant us a gift of merit even in the matter of the doctrine which is thus known as the foremost? It would be well, Reverend Sir, that henceforth you should speak to the Order of monks and grant us a gift of merit." Having said thus and paid homage to the *Tathāgata*, and gone round thrice with folded hands keeping him to his left, he departed to the deva-world with his company. Then the Teacher, when that night had passed away, assembled the Order of monks and said thus : " O monks, henceforth, after you have spoken on the occasion of a great hearing (of the preaching) of the Norm, or of an ordinary hearing (of the preaching) of the Norm, or of making discourse by sitting, or of making even an approval, you should give a gift of merit to all beings." When he had thus spoken, the Order of monks consented, saying : " It is



well, Reverend Sir." From that day even up to the present time they make a gift of merit to all beings. Thus knowing the good qualities of the Buddha and with a heartfelt faith in the Buddha, the Exalted One, the good Norm should be preached and heard. (This account of) spiritual gift is the third.

21. "Leaving aside your own work, you have come here to hear (the preaching of) the Norm. Therefore, the Norm, preached by the *Sambuddha*, should be respectfully heard."

22. "The wise who listen to what was sung and uttered by women about old age, disease and death, obtain the highest reward."

How? Formerly, it is said, during a Buddha-interval, a certain person entered a forest with his seven sons. After having finished the work which was to be done, during day-time, as he was returning from the forest in the evening, he heard a certain woman who, in front of her own door, having filled a mortar with paddy, had been grinding it with a pestle and winnowing it with a little sieve, singing :

23. "This paddy, broken with a pestle and free from chaffs, lies here as mere rice. Look at this bodily form which, when broken with old age, is only a skeleton.

24. This (bodily form) crushed by old age, is supported by the dried up skin and flesh. This is split asunder by death, this is a food eaten by the king of Death. This is an abode of worms, and is filled with various corpses. This is a dish



of impurity, this is unsubstantial like a trunk of the plantain tree.

25. This paddy is broken with a pestle. This body is broken by death. Look, look at the (bodily) form which is broken up, broken up by birth, old age and death."

On hearing this song, when he, on reflection, had led up to the three things, namely, impermanence, ill, and non-soul, he with his sons attained the *Paccekabuddhahood*¹ then and there.

Now, when they were invited by the people at evening time: "Take this food," they replied: "We do not take food after noon, we are *Paccekabuddhas*." "Lord, the *Paccekabuddhas* are not like you." "Then what are they like?" "They having cut off their hair and beard, and having covered themselves with yellow robes, became unattached either to a family or to a company, and they, like the clouds severed by the wind, or like the moon free from the eclipse, live in the caves at the foot of the Nanda forest in the Himalayas. Such are the *Paccekabuddhas*, O sires."

At that moment they all raised their hands upwards, and touched their heads. Instantly, the characteristics of a lay man disappeared, (and) the characteristics of a recluse became manifest (in them). All of them were holding the eight requisites and waistbands. When they, standing in the air, had admonished a great crowd, they

¹ The state of an individual Buddha.



went to the cave at the foot of the Nanda forest in the Northern Himalayas through the air.

Thus the wise men, having heard the teaching included in the song, that is, impermanence, ill and non-soul, became thereby bringers of riddance and bliss. Knowing this, the Ancients therefore said to this effect :

26. " Without considering birth, lineage, family and beauty (of a person) the wise ones should make the Norm firm and hear (the preaching of) the best Norm. A wise man without caring for the colour of a cow, should examine the milk, produced in a cow, for the milk is the best of all tastes. Likewise, the good Norm, whoever preaches it, should be heard with due honour, the Norm being preached by the *Sambuddha*. After hearing the Norm from the *Sambuddha*, all that is preached to others or explained to them, is what was preached by the Buddha."

Knowing this fact, one should hear with due honour the good Norm. (This account of) *Dhaññaakoṭṭhita* is the fourth.

27. " Leaving aside your own work, you have come here to hear (the preaching of) the Norm. Therefore the Norm preached by the *Sambuddha* should be respectfully heard."

28. " Let the wise ones hear what was sung and uttered by women about old age, disease and death, and let them obtain the highest reward."



How? To explain the matter, this is the story :

In the island of Sīhala, it is said, there was a village inhabited by a great multitude. Not far from that village, there was a large pond, full of (blue) lotuses. At that time a female slave moved about, keeping watch over it. Having found the lotuses full-blown in that very pond, she would come down, and while breaking the lotuses, she would sing a song in this manner :

29. "Look at this very beautiful lotus, covered and obstructed by its hairy structures. So long as its fading nature does not overcome it in this way, it looks beautiful and diffuses a sweet smell."

So she said. On hearing the voice of her song, a carrier of "currey leaf," who was gathering flowers from the branches of a *Talambaka* tree, while singing after that song, said :

30. "Look here at this very beautiful person (*kāya*) bearing only the youth. So long as old age does not overcome it, it looks beautiful and makes a gesture of merriment."

On hearing this, the lotus plant thought : "She speaks right, I should now relate the true nature of these lotuses, and I will again speak about this person." Having understood this, she spoke thus :

31. "This person, adorned with the tender leaves, shines glorious and delightful. So long as its fading nature does not overcome it, it looks beautiful and diffuses a sweet smell."



The green leaf replied :

32. " She is intoxicated, she is intoxicated with the pride of beauty, and does not seek for her welfare in this world. So long as old age does not overcome it, it looks beautiful and makes a gesture of merriment."

The lotus plant rejoined :

33. " The sun is up, the pollens are bloomed. The bees sing delightfully. So long as its fading nature does not overcome it, it looks beautiful; and emits a sweet smell."

The green leaf, while giving a reply to that lotus plant, said :

34. " The open and blossomed lotus is spurred by the sunshine, even so the beings, born as men, are moved by the pressure of old age."

At that time only sixty monks practising endurance lived in a suitable place near that village. All of them, lost in concentration, always quiet, and acting rightly day and night, would live mindful of their objects of meditation in walking, in sitting, and in all postures of the body, each of them thinking: "Even this very day I will attain and realise Arahantship." On that day in early morning when they had dressed themselves, and taken their bowls and upper garments, they while going to the village for alms along the path, heard the voice of their songs. And the *thera* addressing all the monks, said: " Friends, what has been spoken by these is true. Like a blossomed lotus the person of all beings is indeed



delightful for a moment." And even standing there, he, while enlightening them, said :

35. " There must have been such a palpable drawback in one's very origin. Similarly, this body looks beautiful at first, but when it comes to old age, it is withered like a lotus."

When he had said this, he spoke thus :
"Friends, all constituents of existence are subject to decay and are of uncertain nature. It is proper even to get wearied of all constituents, it is proper to set oneself free from passion, it is proper to be emancipated." When they, all coming into an emotion, had set up their developed objects of thought and cultivated insight, they attained Arahantship including analytic insight then and there. The *thera*, having understood that those monks had attained Arahantship together with himself, said thus :

36. " This bodily aggregate is a conditioned thing, impermanent, without a soul, an abode of birth, old age, falling away and disease, and has the nature of many sufferings. Leaving it aside, let one come to bliss."

So saying, he went away with them. Thus the good men having heard what is known as the good Norm of the *Tathāgata*, whoever preaches it, and even having mastered the song of the female slave and having heard the Norm, become bringers of their own riddance and bliss. It is for this reason that the good Norm should be heard. (This account of the song of the greenleaf is the fifth.)



37. "Leaving aside your own work, you have come here to hear (the preaching of) the Norm. Therefore the Norm preached by the *Sambuddha* should be respectfully heard."

Why speak of those who are born as men, who know good and no good, moral and immoral, just and unjust? Even those who were born as animals, to wit, frogs, owls, bats, deer, fish, *Ajagaras* (Boa constrictors), rats, snakes, and the like, who had no knowledge of anything, they, too, even on hearing the sound of proclamation of the Norm, only repeated by others, were pleased with that sound of proclamation. And when they had passed away making the voice an object of their thought, they brought their own highest happiness in the next existence. Here the story of a frog is to be related first. As for the frog, this is the connected story :

Once upon a time, it is said, the Exalted One was staying on the bank of a pond of *Gaggara* in the city of *Campaka*. Now one evening, the Exalted One preached the Norm to the inhabitants of *Campaka*. Then a frog who had gone there, made the Exalted One's voice as an object of its thought. A cow-herd who stood there leaning on a stick, pressed its head. Instantly, the frog died and, as one awakened from sleep, it, attended by a company of the celestial nymphs, was reborn in the *Tāvātimsa* heaven, in a golden celestial abode measuring twelve *yojanas* in extent. Subsequently it looked at its own life and reflected thus : " I am born here, what did I do?" It found nothing but its making the Exalted One's voice an object of



its thought. Instantly, it came down with its celestial abode and paid homage at the feet of the Exalted One. The Exalted One, while enquiring in spite of his knowledge, uttered this verse on that occasion :

38. " Who is that, shining in the supernatural Power and in glory, and radiating all directions with an unsurpassed beauty, that pays homage at my feet ?"

The god addressed the Exalted One in a verse :

39. " Formerly, I was a frog in water, and lived in water. As I was hearing the Norm preached by you, a cowherd killed me."

The Exalted One preached him the Norm. At the end of the preaching, eighty-four thousand beings had the realization of the Norm. When the god, also placed on the Fruit of Stream-winner, had gone round in reverence, keeping the Exalted One to his left side, he went away to a heaven. Knowing the significance, however, a wise man, who seeks for his own welfare, should respectfully hear the good Norm. (This) account of a frog is the sixth.

40. " Leaving aside your own work, you have come here to hear (the preaching of) the Norm. Therefore the good Norm preached by the *Sambuddha* should be respectfully heard."

As for the bats, this is the connected story :

Once upon a time, it is said, when in expounding the *Abhidhamma* in heaven, going



beyond the world of men and producing a created Buddha resembling the Sammāsambuddha (the most exalted Buddha) for preaching the Norm among the assemblies of gods, he came down from heaven, and when coming down, he made use of water in the lake *Anotatta* and reared his body, at that time he taught the venerable Sāriputta, who had attended the Exalted One, those units of *Dhamma* which were expounded in heaven. Sāriputta, too, having learnt the entire *Abhidhamma Piṭaka* and codified it in front of the Buddha, repeated it at the entrance of a certain cave. When the five hundred bats, who resided there, had grasped only the sound of that voice and fixed that sound as an object of their thought, they, not knowing even the sense of the *Dhamma*, pondered: "This sound does not press us, nor make us understand. Therefore, those sounds which produce a desire for worldly passions, kill the beings, and are followed by separation, are all harsh, very evil, and not pleasing. This Buddha is charming, worth hearing, and affectionate." Having pondered thus, they made the *Dhamma* an object of their thought, and without seeking for food, passed away even there. By the power of hearing (the preaching of) the Norm those bats were reborn in heaven, each having a company of five hundred thousand (gods) and a golden celestial abode, twelve *yojanas*¹ in extent, resounding with

¹ One *Yojana* is about seven or eight miles.



various sorts of dancing, singing and music by the celestial nymphs. At the moment of their taking rebirth when the king of gods together with the companies of gods had honoured them with the celestial incenses, perfumes, garlands and the rest, in order to show them respect, he said thus :

41. “ (To have) comrades like you in heaven is indeed a joy. Besides, as you were born among men, you have been on a footing for a long time.

42. And the disciples you must be of the Buddha, the pure. On hearing the Norm, preached by Sāriputta, you will enter into *nibbāna*.”

So saying, he again bowed down. All the bat-gods, having experienced the joy in heaven for a long time, passed away, and were reborn in the families of *brāhmaṇas* and householders. When they had grown up as comrades of each other, they heard Sāriputta preaching the Norm, and entered the Order. When they had learnt the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka* and the commentary thereon with their well-intoned speech, and had developed insight shortly after, they became free from the sufferings of existence and destroyed their sins. Those disciples of the Buddha, excepting Sāriputta, who had first learnt the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka* and the commentary thereon with their well-intoned speech, they all became known in this world as comrades of each other like the bat-gods. Because of their abundant faith in the Norm, they, having thus heard only the intoning of voice, experienced joy in heaven till their attainment of *nibbāna*.



To this effect it has been said :

43 & 44. " Why speaking of him who, having learnt the whole meaning (of the *Piṭaka*), repeats it? He who honours it in faith, speaking about the enumeration of its name, comes nearer to one who has mastered a well-intoned speech in respect of the text, in a future existence, as a result of the act done."

Thus it has been said by the Exalted One :

45. " Leave aside the question of one who knows the syllables and the words. - I gained the Bodhi-seed through my knowledge of name and sense.

46. At the sound of the voice of the monks who were expounding the *Abhidhamma*, the bats, too, were delighted, and while rejoicing, they went to heaven.

47. He who, having preached and honoured the *Abhidhamma*, pays homage, reaches a blissful and happy world, and afterwards comes to *nibbāna*.

48. And those, who have taken refuge in the order of the Sakyan Lion, obtain such a footing, after hearing the Norm of the great Sage.

49. Those who make *Dhamma* an object of their thought, and rejoice with a faithful heart, no doubt, experience the advantages of hearing (the preaching of) the Norm."

Knowing this matter, however, a wise man, who seeks his own welfare, should respectfully hear the good Norm. (This) account of bats is the seventh.



As for the young deer, this is the connected story :

In the island of *Sīhala*, it is said, there was a beautiful *vihāra* named *Uddalolaka*. At that time many a deer, pigs, and the like lived in that *vihāra*-park. Now, in a certain village, when a hunter's son had seen many deer and pigs there, had made a room at one side, and had tied up leaves in the boundary of the forest, he stood in the room, taking up his bow and quiver and looking forward to the approach of the deer. Now, when a deer had taken his food here and there, he, while going to a landing place to drink water, heard the sound proclaimed for hearing (the preaching of) the Norm on the spot of that hermitage, and he stood there with his neck stretched out, ears raised, eyes wide open, and feet lifted up, making the voice of the preacher of the Norm an object of his thought. At that very moment the hunter hit him with a single stroke and caused him death. Now, the deer, after his death, took his rebirth in the womb of the younger sister of the great elder Abhaya, a resident of that *vihāra*. When, after the lapse of ten months, he had come out of his mother's womb, he, while growing up gradually, was seven years of age. Thereafter his parents took him to the elder Abhaya. The latter was not long in giving him ordination. The young boy, however, attained Arahantship even on a razor-touch, through the power of his hearing (the preaching of) the Norm, when formerly he was born as a deer. But his maternal uncle, the *thera*, then attained only the



five *abhiññā*¹ (supernatural knowledge) and had not won the Path of an *Arahant*.

Now, one day, the *Sāmaṇera* (novice) went to this religious teacher. Then his teacher stretching forth his hands, crushed the disc of the moon as it were. The *Sāmaṇera*, seeing it, said: "Reverend Sir, this ought to be saved." The *thera*, however, not knowing the fact of his (the *Sāmaṇera*'s) being placed on Arahantship, the highest Fruit, did not carefully consider his words. Then the *Sāmaṇera*, fetching one thousand moons by his super-normal power, showed them to the *thera* and said:

"Reverend Sir, it is not difficult to fetch one hundred moons, one thousand moons, or one hundred thousand moons. But he who eliminates a single desire, is indeed the best. This is indeed difficult." When he had said this, he spoke thus:

50. "A person who goes to a bank, and even while standing on it, sees a great mass of water, says unwisely: 'I have seen this ocean.'

51 & 52. Even so, in this world, a monk who only gives up some of his own lusts, obtains the impermanent power of *abhiññās* (super-normal faculties) and does not destroy (all) lusts, considers himself: 'I have obtained my wishes.' Because of his slavery to desires, he indeed is not free.

53. A monk, who gives up the unlucky, unhappy, dreadful, constantly flowing, and

¹ It also means special knowledge—*Samyutta*, I., 101; *Vinaya*, II. 16; *Paggalapaññatti*, 14. Some have translated it as psychic powers. For list of *abhiññās* vide *Digha*, III, 281.



harmful desires, is free from the bondage of Māra.'"¹

The *thera*, hearing this, won Arahantship even on the same day. Next day, the younger sister of the *thera* invited the *thera* together with the *Sāmaṇera*. The *thera* spoke to his sister thus :

“ *Upāsikā* (female lay disciple), you ought to gladden your heart this day at the sight of many monks. But let the share (of food) be (ready) for both of us.” When (the *thera*) had sent her back, he, having dressed himself in the forenoon and taking his bowl and upper garment, came with some thirty-thousand monks. She, seeing this, prepared two seats for the uncle and the nephew. These became as many as thirty-thousand through their power. Even through their power her house was enlarged. The monks were seated in their respective seats. The soup, curry, and the like, all that she had prepared for two persons, was enough for as many as thirty thousand monks, and as much as they needed. When they had finished their meal, the female lay devotee took the bowl of the *Sāmaṇera* in order to get the meal approved (by him). In their midst, he, too, while increasing the blessing and uttering sweet voice, preached the Norm. When the sermon was finished, five hundred families, consisting of father, mother, and the rest, found a

¹ Buddhist satan, vide my *Buddhistic Studies*, Chap. X, pp. 257-283.



support in the fruit of a Stream-winner. This preaching was profitable to many people.

54. "When (the Norm) is thus preached, the wood-born deer which grasp the Norm, even making the sound an object of their thought, attain the wealth of the human life and the final liberation. A wise man established in faith in the Buddha, having heard the Norm well, delights in this world, nay, in heaven in a celestial abode, describable by a sage."

(This) account of a young deer is the eighth.

55. "Leaving aside your own work, you have come here to hear the Norm. Therefore the Norm, preached by the *Sambuddha*, should be respectfully heard."

As for a fish, this is the connected story :

Once upon a time, many merchants, desirous of going to the island of *Laṅkā*, took a sea-going ship. When they had equipped the ship with the various kinds of goods and had filled it with other provisions, such as sesame, rice and the like, they started under the constellation of *Bhaddā*. At that time a monk, desirous of going to the other shore with them, asked the merchants for a room for himself, and when they had given him a room, he entered it and was seated. Then the ship, evenly borne by the wind, went on peacefully. Even being seated there, the monk while mastering thoroughly his study, recited a portion of (the chapter, called) 'Rise of consciousness' thus :
 " Things are moral, immoral and unmoral. They are associated with a feeling which is either



pleasant or painful or neither pleasant nor painful."

When a great fish, which was moving there by one side of the ship, had heard only the sound of the voice of the monk's recitation, it became pleased with that sound, and did not make up its mind to go elsewhere. Having but one intention there it followed the ship closely at its back, keeping, however, both of its ears motionless. While following the ship as far as the landing place, it had its thought attracted by the hearing of the sound. Then struck by the people standing on the bank of the landing place, it died then and there.

In the island of Sīhala, there was a country known as Rohiṇī.¹ Reborn in a wealthy family there, he grew up with great supremacy and good company. Since at the birth-time of the young boy, his relatives were pleased and delighted, they named him Sumana-Tissa. But in that house, the monks attended by his parents, would regularly take their food. By constant look, young boy was pleased with their conduct and living, and even when he came of age, he, leaving aside such wealth, wished to be initiated. Although he was entreated by his parents in many ways, he did not pay heed to their words, and even while they were crying and lamenting, he made them give permission for his initiation, as did the sons of Raṭṭhapāla. From the time of his

¹ It should be Rohana which was the south and south-east part of Laṅkā. Cf. *Mahāvamsa*, chap. XXII. V. 6.



initiation he, while in a *Sāmaṇera*-stage, mastered thoroughly the entire *Suttanta Piṭaka* and *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*, and during his ordination period, he, having mastered the entire *Vinaya Piṭaka*, became versed in the three *Piṭakas*. Because of his initiation through faith, he was known as the faithful *thera* Sumana-Tissa. Like the moon resting in the expanse of the heavens, he was renowned and had a great company. He arrived at the island of Nāga for the purpose of worshipping the Great Cetiya. And there in the beautiful garden of Mulgiri, assembled the Order of monks who were fond of delighting in seclusion and devoted to contemplation. On seeing it, when the elder, gladdened at heart, had been pleased and had cooled his hands and feet, he was seated cross-legged near a tree, making the Buddha an object of his thought. And as soon as he directed his thought, he attained Arahantship, the highest fruit, even though by a voice as his one object of thought, he became worthy of the highest gift of the world. By what, however, was this Arahantship given? It was given by the hearing of the Norm with due respect.

To this effect the Ancients said :

56. “ And those fishes living in water, which had heard the Norm recited, and had been sympathetic by that voice, when reborn, reached emancipation.”

Therefore, the good Norm should be respectfully heard. (This) account of the faithful elder Sumana is the ninth.



57. "Leaving aside your own work, you have come here to hear the Norm. Therefore the Norm, preached by the *Sambuddha*, should be respectfully heard."

As for the *Ajagara*-serpent (Boa Constrictor), this is the connected story :

In the time of Kassapa, the Exalted Buddha, it is said, some one was reborn as an *Ajagara*-serpent. Having approached the monks, versed in the *Abhidhamma*, he lay down. As they were reciting a discourse on the sphere of senses, he, having made the voice an object of his thought, died, and was reborn in heaven. Even in heaven, he experienced the bliss till the attainment of the *Parinibbāna* by our Teacher. When the Exalted One had attained the *Parinibbāna*, he was, however, reborn in a brāhmaṇa family. When he came of age, he took the vow of an *Ājīvaka*¹ mendicant, and became the family-priest of the chief consort of king Bindusāra.²

At that time four kinds of longing of a pregnant woman were manifest in that lady. Which were the four? (These were :) Longing to eat

¹ *Ājīvika* or *Ājīvaka*—a monastic sect, an extremely ancient penitential order. The members of the sect went about naked and were noted for the ascetic practices of the most rigorous kind. The *Ājīvikas* or *Maskarins* were extremely fatalists having little or nothing in common with the Buddhists. They cherished a very tender regard for all forms of life. They were no doubt the advocates of the mode of right living, consistent with the principles of spiritual life. For details vide my *Historical Gleanings*, Chap. III.

² Son of Chandragupta Maurya, who ascended the throne in 298 B.C.



the light of the stars, after treading upon the sun and the moon; longing to eat the clouds; longing to eat earth-worms; longing to eat trees which drink with feet and breathe with leaves.

Therefore, the *Ājīvaka* explained to the king the means by which her longings would be allayed. In that connection, the king was cleverly informed. Being asked, 'Why are (these) longings manifest in the queen?' He explained, 'O great king, this queen will get a beautiful prince, perfect in all respects.' When he, desirous of explaining in detail the meaning of her longings, had approached the queen, he was seated on a costly seat assigned by her. Being enquired by the queen, 'What is the matter?' he replied, 'I have something to say. I did not say it to the enemies in the midst of the royal assembly. Now I have come to say this to you.'

When she had said, 'Sir, please speak, we shall hear it,' He spoke, 'O queen, I will speak only about your getting a son, not anything else. Now hear it.' 'O queen, your son,' continued he, 'will be a king. Your longing for treading upon the sun and the moon forecasts that in the whole of Jambudīpa, there will be one hundred kings serving at his feet; your longing to eat the light of stars is a foregoing sign of his act of killing his brother who will be just an unpleasant heir to him; your longing to eat the clouds is a foregoing sign of his exertion just for (the growth of) the excellent religion of the Buddha, after destroying ninety-six sects who will come into



disputation with him; your longing to eat trees which drink with feet and breathe with leaves, is a foregoing sign of his issuing orders extending one *yojana* above in the air." And thus when he had related all portents and results of her longing, he said: "You have got such longing because of your getting the very son, bear this in mind." Highly delighted at this, she said: "If those (good) results are accomplished, I will fetch you in a golden palanquin from your dwelling place." She paid him reverence, and while establishing a connection with him, asked his name, caused it to be written in a golden plate, and took leave of him. Subsequently, the ceremony for the protection of her embryo being duly performed, she gave birth in due time and got a son.

Now one day, the king caused that boy to sit down on his lap, and while making him play, he took his seat. Some other people having brought a precious shell, the spiral of which turned to the right, placed it on the king's hand. The young boy let loose the precious stone. So the king took him with the precious shell and besprinkled over the boy's head. And the queen, seeing this, was angry and took the boy from his hands, and informed her own family priest of this matter. The latter explained: "O queen, surely this son of yours will be the highest king in the whole of Jambudīpa." And when he, honoured by her, had gone one hundred *yojanas* therefrom, he lived in a certain place. Now in course of time, when Dhammāsoka had suppressed his enemies and had



ascended the throne after his father's death, he, one day, asked his mother: "Mother, was this fortune of ours predicted formerly or not?" She replied: "Dear son, we have a family priest who predicted such thing." On hearing "In what, mother, wherein does he live?" She said, "Only one hundred *yojanas* hence." Thinking 'I shall honour the teacher', he sent his men with a golden palanquin for him. While being carried by them, he (the priest) noticed, on his way, the dwelling place of the elder Assagutta in *Vattaniya-senāsana*. Thinking 'This must be the dwelling place of the recluses', he descended from the palanquin and went on foot to that place, when he had seen the lions, tigers, hyænas, large species of deer, pigs, deer (in general), and the like, which had been formerly bent on annoying the other, united in a harmonious group with kindly thought, through the power of love of the elder, and when he had also seen the elder serving them with water, he asked the elder: "What are these?" While examining his fortune, the elder found that it had been due to the fact of his formerly hearing a discourse on the *āyatanas*, and thinking "Let the very thing be his assurance (of the goal)", he replied: "These are called *āyatanas*, friend." He asked: "What are the doings of these?" and was replied in that connection: "The very *āyatanas* (causes)¹ are their doings." And even

¹ *Āyatana* also means cause, abode, receptacle, source place of origin, etc.



as he heard this, he was taken by shame and fear of sin and he was seated in the posture of squatting. The elder gave him a bathing mantle. Then he, having asked for initiation, became initiated in the presence of the elder. When he had accepted a particular formula regarding the object of his thought (from his teacher), had developed an insight, and had ended all ill of transmigration, he reached *Arahantship*, the highest fruit. But by whom this *Arahantship* given? Was it not given by the hearing of the Norm with due respect?

To this effect said the Ancients :

58. "On hearing the Norm recited, the *ajagara*-serpent, who was delighted with that voice, passed away (from that existence to the other), and then attained emancipation."

Therefore the good Norm should be respectfully heard. (This) account of an *ajagara*-serpent is the tenth.

59. "Leaving aside your own work, you have come here to hear the Norm. Hence, the Norm, preached by the Blessed One, should be respectfully heard."

As for the rat-snake, this is the connected story :

When the great king Kākavanna-Tissa was reigning in Mahāgāma in the Rohana country in the island of Laṅkā, the elder Mahādhammadinna, a resident of the Talaṅgaratissa mountain, was staying in the Devarakkhita cave. At that time there was a great ant-hill near this cave. There in the ant-hill, a rat-snake lived, taking his food



wherever he pleased. As time went on thus, one day, while he was taking his food, (they) destroyed his both eyes. Being afflicted with pain and unable to take his food outside the ant-hill, he lay there. Thereafter the elder, seeing the rat-snake afflicted and lying in that way, and being compassionate towards him, stood on the path of his hearing and preached the Norm with the help of the *Mahāsatipatṭhāna-suttanta*.¹ While hearing that Norm, he set up his object of thought in the voice and inclined his heart towards it. At the very moment an iguana killed and ate him. By that result (of *kamma*) he passed away therefrom, and was reborn in the family of a certain minister of king Duṭṭhagāmini in *Anurādhapura*. As he grew up, they named him Tissāmacca. He was endowed with the various kinds of wealth, such as gold, money, cows, buffaloes, and servants, male and female, and the like. By the mere taking up of a thought-object in a voice, the Norm produces such a great fortune. Oh, the power of the good Norm!

As to this, these are the citations :

60. “ Oh, the power of the Norm of *Sugata*, the great sage! It makes him who is born, free from birth and honoured by the world.

61. The Norm always makes a poor man rich; a low-born person to attain the position of a high family and a stupid to attain intelligence.

¹ *Dīgha*, II, pp. 290-315.



62. The path to hell is straight and is a thorny fence, while the path to heaven is a well-prepared high road.

63. In avoidance of old age and disease, this good Norm is a sure footing of immortality. Therefore this should be practised reverentially even by a group of people.

64. Therefore one, who hears this lusture of the Norm, attains the human prosperity. Would there be a person wishing for his own good who would not practise that useful Norm?

Later, on, he, having performed many meritorious deeds, passed away, and, as one awakened from sleep, was reborn in a golden celestial abode in the excellent heaven.

65. "Let him who is calmed, hear the immortal (Norm) set in motion by the Conqueror. Let him practise, honour and worship it. Let him take shelter in it, while standing, walking, lying, and sitting. Let there be always devotion (in him)."

The account of a rat-snake is the eleventh.

Here ends the Chapter, called the 'Account of the Advantages of Hearing (the Preaching of) the Norm' in the *Saddhammasamgaha*, compiled for the serene joy and emotion of the pious.

The Colophon

1. In Sīhala, there was a person who, like the moon, shone in the sphere of the religion, and enlightened the 'water-born' people residing in Laṅkā with the rays of knowledge.



2. His name was Dhammakitti, and he was virtuous and a mine of merits. Like the moon in the sky, he was renowned in the Sīhala island.

3. In the entire *Piṭakas*, and in grammar, and the like, he reached perfection. He was highly intelligent, and he brightened the island of Laṅkā.

4. His disciple, famous as Dhammakitti-Mahāsāmī, who had endeavoured to come over to Laṅkā, reached the delightful Laṅkā.

5. There he, having performed many meritorious deeds and having received the *pabbajjā* (ordination) from the elder, returned to his own country, and reached the city of Yodaya.

6 & 7. While staying in a great residence called the Laṅkā-rāma, built by the great king named Paramarājā, the eminent master Dhammakitti, pure in conduct, and wise, compiled this (work) called the *Saddhammasaṅgaha*, complete in all respects.



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